JUST WORLD TRUST

Human Wrongs

Reflections on Western Global Dominance and its Impact Upon Human Rights

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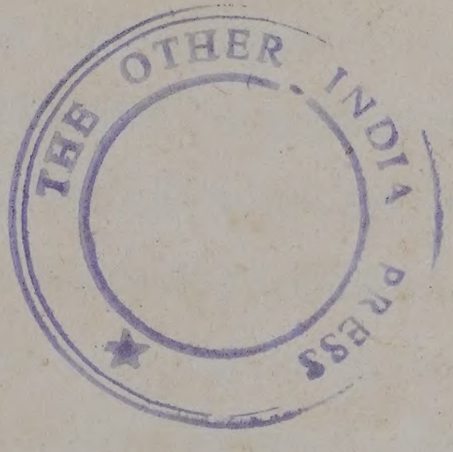

JUST WORLD TRUST
(JUST)

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PREFACE

In December 1994, Just World Trust (JUST) organised an international conference in Kuala Lumpur on the theme "Rethinking Human Rights". This book is a product of that conference.

The process of rethinking human rights—or for that matter any other complex set of ideas—encompasses at least two inter-related stages. In the first stage one has to begin by evaluating and analysing the ideas and practices associated with the dominant pattern of human rights. Only then can one move to the second stage involving the articulation of an alternative approach (or approaches) to the dominant pattern.

From the outset we made it abundantly clear that our conference was concerned primarily with the first stage. There was an urgent need to examine critically human rights concepts, interpretations and practices spawned by mainstream Western society. Within the human rights community in not only the West but also in the non-Western world there is very little questioning of how the dominant centres of power in the West conceive of human rights and how they approach human rights issues especially in non-Western societies. Most of the time their self-proclaimed role as defenders of human rights world-wide is accepted at face value. This is why we felt that we had to subject to scrutiny the dominant West's actual human rights record. At the same time we try to show why its perspective on human rights itself is problematic. Once the human rights community is liberated from its somewhat slavish adherence to the dominant West's human rights paradigm, it would be easier to explore in a creative manner new ideas and new visions on human rights which could lead to a more holistic understanding of human dignity founded upon social justice.

The truth is that the dominant West's human rights record taken as a whole is appalling. In the midst of all the euphoria about the triumph of human rights and democracy in the post-cold war era it is often forgotten that the greatest violations of human rights in history—and indeed right up to the present—have been committed not by some tinpot despot in the non-Western world but by dominant centres of power in the West itself. A number of papers in this book discuss this in depth and detail. Starting with the barbaric annihilation of indigenous

peoples in at least three continents followed by the brutal enslavement of our African sisters and brothers and culminating in the indignities of oppressive colonial rule in Asia, our paper writers argue that Western dominance and control persists to this day—albeit in different guises. They show how Western dominance and control which has become far more subtle and sophisticated today impacts upon almost every sphere of society—economic, political, military, information, cultural, scientific and intellectual—with catastrophic consequences for the human rights of five-sixths of humanity. Indeed, the structures of dominance and the culture and values they represent, have had a baneful effect even upon the West. Because Western dominance is global in character, the United Nations (UN) itself, as one of our writers points out, has become a tool of certain Western powers and is in no position to protect the rights of ordinary people.

Viewed from this angle it is not difficult to understand why this critique of the Western concept and practice of human rights is called *Human Wrongs* for it lays bare the human wrongs wrought in the name of human rights not only in the different spheres of society but also in different parts of the world. In elaborating upon these human wrongs, this collection of essays goes beyond what one would find in most human rights works. It analyses the causes behind the wrongs—causes related to structures, attitudes and values. What is equally significant, the book, while concentrating upon Western global dominance and its impact upon human rights, also chastises elites in the non-Western world who have no compunctions about suppressing the rights of their own people.

The book also offers alternatives to the dominant Western view of human rights—though here again this is not the central purpose of the present study. In this regard the tentative explorations of ideas on human rights and human dignity embodied in various religions provide some useful insights. These are insights that have to be developed in future discourses. However, there are two salient points made in this work which one should bear in mind in any such undertaking. One, in drawing out values and ideals from our religious philosophies we cannot ignore the fact that a lot of what we regard as our religious traditions are in fact inimical to the very notion of human dignity enshrined in many of our basic spiritual teachings.

Two, given the way in which the realities of a multi-religious world are beginning to impinge upon the consciousness of each and every one of us, it is inevitable that any endeavour to revitalise and rejuvenate ideas such as human dignity from within each of our religious philosophies will have to take into account the global environment at the end of the millennium. A multi-religious world demands a universal, rather than a sectarian outlook ; an inclusive rather than an exclusive approach.

But to develop that universal, inclusive concept and practice of human dignity we must first know what is wrong with the present human rights paradigm.

Chandra Muzaffar
Director
JUST WORLD TRUST (JUST)
August 1996

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Though it is not possible to thank each and every individual who contributed to this effort, Just World Trust (JUST) would like to commend Edda De Silva who helped in the organisation of the International Conference on Rethinking Human Rights and provided invaluable editorial assistance in the preparation of this book .

It is also fitting in this regard, to say a general but heartfelt *terima kasih* (thank you) to all those who contributed to the successful organisation of the Rethinking Human Rights Conference from which the papers presented in this book are derived.

JUST also wishes to thank Mahmuda Atta Mohamed, who served in the Editorial Sub-Committee for the Conference and later worked on several sections of the book; and Farheen Mukri for editing the final drafts.

Introductory Remarks

Chandra Muzaffar

On behalf of the Just World Trust (JUST), it gives me great pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to you.

This international conference on "Rethinking Human Rights" has brought together participants from different parts of the world. Human rights activists and advocates from some 60 countries are gathered here in Kuala Lumpur this morning. They come from Japan and China in the East to Britain and the United States in the West.

In a sense, this conference is the first human rights conference of its kind to be held anywhere in the world. Its primary, essential focus is Western global dominance and its impact upon human rights. It seeks to assert a simple but fundamental truth: that Western global dominance is, and has been, one of the greatest threats to the human rights and human dignity of human beings everywhere.

It was Western dominance which, in its early centuries, committed the cruellest, crudest genocide in human history—the elimination of more than 90 million indigenous peoples in Australasia and the Americas through the wrath of war and the ravage of epidemics. It was Western dominance which, through the brutal, barbaric slave trade robbed 25 million sons and daughters of Africa of their freedom and dignity. And it was Western dominance expressing itself through the ruthless, rapacious might of colonialism which stripped millions and millions of men and women in Asia and Africa of every conceivable right and liberty.

Though formal colonial rule has ended, Western domination has resurrected itself in newer forms of control which impact upon human rights in ways that are perhaps more subtle and sophisticated but no less destructive and devastating. The dominant centres of power, wealth and knowledge in the West have created an unjust, unequal global system which allows superpowers and superstates to invade alien lands, occupy foreign territories, impose economic sanctions, usurp natural resources, manipulate terms of trade, suppress industrial growth, thwart technology transfers, perpetuate crippling debts, dump toxic wastes,

monopolise the international arteries of information, crush alternative ideas, marginalise non-Western cultures—with maximum impunity and minimum accountability.

It is because the centres of power in the West are determined to maintain a certain structure of political control and dominance that 200,000 freedom-loving human beings have been massacred in the very heart of Europe. It is because of the arrogant desire of a superpower and its intimate ally to ensure their dominance that five million men, women and children in a certain part of West Asia continue to bear so much pain and agony as they struggle to regain just a small portion of the land they lost in 1948. It is partly because the powerful want to perpetuate, even enhance their suffocating grip over a crucial region of the world that the entire population of another West Asian country is being starved into submission and surrender. It is because of the economic power of the dominant West that 650,000 children die every year in Asia, Africa and Latin America—as a result of harsh debt servicing requirements imposed by the strong upon the weak.

It would of course be wrong to suggest that Western global dominance is the only challenge to the integrity and dignity of the human being. The dominant power of oppressive, authoritarian ruling elites within nation-states is also a very real threat to human rights. Caste and colour domination, ethnic and religious domination, class and gender domination have also at various times destroyed all that is precious in life and living.

But while hundreds of articles have been written and thousands of speeches have been made on how all these forms of domination threaten human rights, very little attention is given in contemporary human rights discourse to Western global dominance as a major cause of the suppression of human dignity. The reason for this is obvious. Those who occupy the dominant centres of power in the West do not want the rest of the human family to discover this terrible truth about them—they who strut the world as the purest and holiest apostles of human rights. After all it is these centres of power—specifically, the mainstream Western media and certain Western governments—who decide which human rights violations should be highlighted and which human rights violations should be downplayed. It is these centres of power who set the human rights agenda for the world. They mould our consciousness on human rights issues. They shape our thinking on human rights.

This is why there is an urgent need to rethink human rights. Rethinking human rights would require as a first step the readiness to question that pattern of global dominance which has perpetrated and perpetuated some of the most horrendous violations of human rights known to humankind. This is what JUST's international human rights conference hopes to do. We shall examine and analyse the political, economic, cultural, information, intellectual, scientific, ecological and military dimensions of Western domination and show how adverse their impact has been upon the vast majority of humanity. At the same time we shall evaluate the consequences of Western hegemonic policies for the poor and powerless of the non-Western world struggling to survive against overwhelming odds. We shall also try to probe the gap between rhetoric and reality within the Western world itself where endemic racism, for instance, threatens to make a mockery of all its lofty claims about human rights and human liberties.

But our conference will do more than just expose human wrongs parading as human rights. We shall raise fundamental questions about the dominant Western concept of human rights itself. What sort of human rights is it that emphasises civil and political rights while sidelining economic, social and cultural rights? Can a rights concept that centres around the individual fulfil the aspirations of whole communities and collectivities? How can a view of human rights which confines itself to transgressions within the nation-state address the increasingly crucial challenge of human rights violations at the global level? Is it possible to conceive of rights which are not linked to responsibilities? Isn't it true that a concept of rights which is not founded upon a coherent, integrated, holistic vision of spiritual values must lead inevitably to moral chaos and confusion as it is beginning to happen within segments of Western society today?

While this conference, as it should be apparent by now, will be critical of the Western concept and practice of human rights, it would not be fair to suggest that we seek to reject the Western human rights tradition in total. We have always acknowledged that there are elements in that tradition—from the concept of an independent judiciary to the principle of the legitimacy of dissent—which have enhanced both the dignity of the human being and the value of human civilisation. But what is sad is that while there is a willingness on our part to admit that there are unique strengths in the Western human rights tradition,

there are not many human rights thinkers and activists in the West or the East today who are prepared to defend the dignity of humanity against Western global domination—even when the victims of this hegemony are sometimes innocent infants.

However, the human rights thinkers and activists who have been invited to present papers and speak at this conference are a different breed of men and women. They are deeply committed to the struggle for a just world where the dignity of all human beings would become our common cause. Some of them are internationally renowned scholars who have written about issues pertaining to global justice for decades.

Just World Trust has also invited Dr. Mahathir Mohamad to officiate at this function not simply because he is the Prime Minister of Malaysia. At a time when most leaders in the international arena are busy adjusting to the new realities of power and politics in the post-Cold War era, Dr. Mahathir has chosen to speak out with courage and conviction against some of the most blatant injustices emerging from global domination and control. His often lonely plea for justice and fairness, whether it is on Bosnia-Herzegovina or on APEC, or on UN reform, has struck a responsive chord among ordinary men and women everywhere who cherish human dignity.

Finally, JUST hopes that this conference will be the beginning of a sustained, systematic endeavour to increase social awareness of the consequences of Western global domination for the human rights and human dignity of the vast majority of humanity. Out of this consciousness should emerge a common, collective effort to articulate the spiritual and moral values and principles of a just world. A world that is just because it upholds the dignity of each and every human being.

Keynote Address

Mahathir Mohamad

If I may be permitted I would like to go back in history a little. It is well known that ever since men began to live in groups or communities, the concept of their rights and obligations to the community had always bothered the members. No sooner had they devised a set of values to protect the members of the community from each other and from those empowered to enforce the rules of communal living, they found that they were either unenforceable or that abuses could be perpetrated by the members and by the very people elevated to positions of authority.

And so concepts and rules were revised again and again. And so in any community the rules and values differed as between different periods of its development. While a society may consider hanging a man for the crime of stealing a sheep in one period as the natural and just thing to do, in another day and age it may consider that hanging to death as a punishment, even for blatant murder of a fellow man, as being too barbaric and inhuman.

As the world has numerous communities and the state of their development differs widely, it is natural to expect that their concepts of human rights, of justice, and of obligation to the community to differ and differ widely.

Perhaps the focus on human rights as being universal crystallised during the Second World War. Prior to that, the Europeans, who had nicely divided up the world into their empires where they were free to do what they liked with their colonial inhabitants, did not believe in the universality of human rights. The rights of the White man were to rule the non-Whites, to civilise them, and to spread their particular religion. This was the White man's burden and it was glorified as a God-given task.

The non-White colonial people must accept White rule totally. If there were abuses of authority by the Whites, the colonial people had to accept this as a part of the process of civilising them, of bringing order and a modicum of development to them. They may not question their

colonial masters and certainly they may not strive to free themselves. For them human rights practically did not exist. For the imperial nations of Europe, human rights were only for their own people. They were not universal and did not apply to colonial people.

But World War II saw the horrors of the German concentration camps where six million European Jews were killed after unbelievable cruelty was perpetrated against them. In the East, the Japanese ran prisoners-of-war camps for surrendered Europeans. Although they were never as systematic in meting out cruel treatments, they nevertheless cruelly abused their prisoners.

Shocked by these brutalities, the Allied powers decided that such cruelties must never happen again. They decided to spell out universal human rights which were to be enforced by a new organisation, the United Nations Organisation (UNO). Ignoring totally and unembarrassed by the horrors they brought to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they blithely enunciated their version of universal human rights.

The preamble to the United Nations Charter among other things, reads thus: "We the peoples of the U.N., determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

Almost immediately, the victorious allied founders of the U.N. ran into trouble with their universal human rights. They had thought that their victory would bring about a restoration of their empires in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. They thought they were to be the ones to enforce their codes among their native subjects. That this was their view was made clear by the great Winston Churchill who grandly declared that he was not elected to preside over the dissolution of the British Empire.

But in the event, the colonial territories struck back by demanding independence based on the very universality of human rights which was spelt out in the U.N. Charter. To cut a long story short, the erstwhile colonies gained independence one by one. Mostly, the imperial powers gave up with little grace, frequently fighting against the granting of independence with the kind of cruelty which makes nonsense of their subscription to human rights principles.

But old imperialistic ways do not die. They merely metamorphose. Almost as soon as the colonies became independent, colonialism by other means was initiated.

Economic forces, the Western media and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) carried on where the colonial governments left off. The U.N. may talk of the ". . . equal rights . . . of nations, large and small", but it became clear that large nations, or rather powerful nations, were more equal than small nations. Neo-colonialism perpetuated the old hegemony.

But the major Allied powers which created the U.N. and drafted its Charter split up into East and West, i.e. the Soviet bloc and the Western bloc. Fearful of the possibility of the new states switching over to the Eastern bloc, the governments of the Western Allies were careful when applying pressure on the new nations.

Much later the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed leaving a unipolar world. All pretense at non-interference in the affairs of independent nations was dropped. A new international order was enunciated in which the powerful countries claim a right to impose their system of government, their free market and their concept of human rights on every country.

All countries must convert to the multi-party system of government and practise the liberal views on human rights as conceived by the Europeans and the North Americans.

Most nations agree that the democratic form of government is better than the feudal or totalitarian systems. But even among the Western democracies, practices differ. Thus, while the multi-party system is advocated, many Western nations effectively allow only two parties to function in their own countries.

The multi-party system can result in no party being able to get a sufficient majority to form a government. Proportional representation by parties will have the same result. Even a two-party system can result in very weak majorities which put the government at the mercy of their more unscrupulous members and their threats to rebel or cross over and bring down the government.

Developed countries can do with weak governments or no government. But developing countries cannot function without strong authority on the part of government. Unstable and weak governments will

result in chaos, and chaos cannot contribute to the development and well-being of developing countries. Divisive politics will occupy the time and minds of everyone, as we can witness in many a developing country today.

The developing countries, by and large, want to practise democracy but must they practise only the liberal forms prescribed by the West, forms which will retard their development and continued independence? But they are continuously being harassed through economic pressures including withdrawal of aid and loans, by carping criticisms and deliberate misinformation by the Western media and by campaigns on the part of Western NGOs, who sometimes finance pressure groups within the country to obstruct the government which they label as undemocratic. Even if the government is replaced, the new government would still be harassed.

But that is not all. While the Western liberals would badger people to opt for democracy and where they think fit to overthrow their "undemocratic" government, they can expect no help if they get into trouble while attempting to democratise their country. Thus the Kurds of Iraq were urged to shake off the rule of Saddam Hussein and establish their own country. When, after the Western countries had forced the Iraqis out of Kuwait, the Kurds rebelled, they were given no help except for gleeful reports by the Western media regarding the problems posed by the Kurds against Saddam Hussein's government. The rebellion was mercilessly put down while the Western democrats merely looked on.

In Yugoslavia, the different states of the Federation were encouraged to democratically strive for independence. All the states had to face military opposition from the dominant Serbs. In Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serbs mounted a savage attack and openly declared their intention to carry out "ethnic cleansing", a euphemism for genocide. Hundreds of thousands of Croats and Bosnian Muslims and non-Muslims were killed, tens of thousands of women were raped and millions were rendered homeless and forced to migrate. But the Western liberals did practically nothing to ensure that democratic processes were respected by the Serbs.

The record of the democratic governments of the West is not very inspiring. Unless their own interests are at stake, as in Kuwait, they would not risk anything in the cause of democracy. Is it any wonder

that many countries are leery of the liberal system propounded by the Western democrats?

If the record of the Western democrats in propagating their ideology is dismal, their own human rights records are worse. The West's interpretation of human rights is that every individual can do what he likes, free from any restraint by governments. It does not matter if the government is elected democratically by the majority of the people. Governments, according to the liberal democrats, cannot in any way act against the personal wishes of the individual in society.

The result is perhaps not quite what the original liberal democrats expected. Individuals soon decided that they should break every rule and code governing their society. Beginning with simple things like dress codes, they went on to discard marriage as an institution. Extramarital sex became the norm. The family was redefined to mean cohabitation between a man and a woman, with frequent changes of partners, or between a man and a man or woman and woman. Children were begotten without known fathers, which in time will lead to incest between brothers and sisters and even father and daughter or mother and son. But then incest to them is not wrong either, if that is what is desired by the individual.

Hedonism and total immorality are the norms of absolute freedom for one and all. Yet women dressed and behaving provocatively object to being sexually harassed, while leaders are expected to have unblemished records on sex and drugs. Clearly, Western society is confused as to what it wants. It wants absolute freedom for everyone but no freedom when individuals or society objects. If individuals or society can object to sexual harassment or infidelity among their leaders then there cannot be absolute freedom. And yet the West insists that freedom must in no way be fettered and that everyone must accept Western norms. They see nothing contradictory in their contrary attitudes.

But it is with regard to freedom from oppression and brutality that Western hypocrisy is at its worst. Western governments, their media and their NGOs, are tireless in their condemnation of non-Western countries for their human rights records. They threaten sanctions, withdrawal of aid, stoppage of loans, economic and trade union boycotts and actual military strikes against those they accuse of violating human rights. They even kidnap people in other countries in order to try them

in their courts under their laws if they see fit to do so. They have no respect for independence or territorial integrity in their zeal to uphold their human rights principles.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the much vaunted victory over Iraq, the Western powers declared that the independence of nations notwithstanding, they have a right to interfere in the internal affairs of a country if there is evidence of human rights violation. This is very noble but the method is questionable. What qualifies the Western liberal democrats to become both judge and executor of the behaviour of nations and citizens of other countries? If there is to be interference in the internal affairs of nations, should not the U.N. be the right body to lay down the rules and to act? But the mild objections by insignificant nations were brushed aside. And so, among other things, people in distant lands who unknowingly breach the laws of powerful nations are tried in absentia and sentenced. The implication of this is frightening. When you can be tried under the laws of another country where you have no rights, you have lost your freedom and your independence. You have become colonised again.

And among the other things is Western hypocrisy in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Having arrogated to themselves the right to intervene anywhere where human rights are violated, surely the champions of human rights were not going to allow the Serbs to commit atrocities and genocide. Armed troops were sent complete with sophisticated weapons, tanks, jet fighters and bombers by the Western democratic champions of human rights. To do what? To stand and watch as Serbs butchered 200,000 Bosnian Muslims and Croats, raped tens of thousands of women, operated concentration camps no less hideous than what the Nazis had done, and hounded millions from their homes and their land. And still the Serbs went on with their ethnic cleansing in full view of the soldiers and generals of the countries which had vowed to put an end to violation of human rights everywhere.

Every now and again the Serbs were threatened by these so-called defenders of human rights. They, the Serbs, would be bombed if they do not stop. After a brave display of the prowess of Western air superiority and sophisticated war planes, the whole NATO forces withdrew and whimpered. The Serbs were again urged to negotiate. The Serbs shelled and rocketed the Bosnians. People, innocent people, even pa-

tients in hospitals, were killed and wounded. The champions of human rights, worried that their soldiers might be scratched, did nothing.

The Serbs have the weapons. The Bosnians have none. The champions of human rights believe this is an ideal situation. If the Bosnians are given weapons then instead of the Bosnians alone being killed, the Serbs might be wounded also. So there would be more casualties. Besides, the Serbs will get angry with the U.N. for not keeping their Bosnian victims unarmed, and they might turn their guns on the NATO forces. This cannot be allowed to happen. The U.N. is there to keep the peace not to enforce peace. If the Serbs do not stop fighting then there is no peace to keep. So there is nothing the NATO forces can do. The Serbs can go on with their butchering of the Bosnians, their conquest of territories. And now the Serbs are faced with the fiercest threat. If they do not stop attacking the Bosnians, NATO will withdraw its troops and let the Serbs conquer Bosnia. Not only are the Western liberals cowards but their logic is twisted as well.

This then is the reality and irony of Western human rights. On the one hand, non-Western Governments are threatened because of some minor breach of human rights; on the other hand, when Western interests are not at stake, they are prepared to allow the most brutal violation of human rights to take place before their very eyes.

It is rather difficult for us to agree to and accept these double standards. And this unwillingness to accede has brought on a tirade of accusations about Asian recalcitrance. It would seem that Asians have no right to define and practise their own sets of values about human rights. What, we are asked, are Asian values? The question is rhetorical because the implication is that Asians cannot possibly understand human rights, much less set up their own values.

This conference is about human rights. If, indeed, human rights have already been determined and remain only to be accepted, then I do not think a conference is necessary. Obviously in holding your conference you believe that human rights need to be discussed, to be defined or redefined and to be propagated.

No one, no country, no people and no civilisation has a right to claim that it has a monopoly of wisdom as to what constitutes human rights. Certainly from the records and the performance of the Western liberals, they are least capable of defining and preaching human rights. Indeed,

at the moment they have no right at all to talk of human rights, much less judge others on this issue.

But admittedly Asians are not the best examples of the protagonists of human rights, either. They have been guilty in the past and, perhaps, lately too. But not as pictured by the Western media.

I hope your conference will be able to examine human rights not as Asians or Europeans but as members of the human race. It is timely, for faith in modern civilisation is fast diminishing. We can put a man on the moon. We can examine stars light-years away, we can achieve instant contact with every part of the world, we can build intelligent machines and many more wonders. But we are still quite uncivilised, for when it comes to killing each other, we are worse than animals. The liberal views of the West on human rights and on other issues do not provide the answers to the woes of today's world. Everyone including "the bunch of Asians" must be allowed to make suggestions and contribute towards devising new sets of values which may help resolve some of the problems we face today. I hope you can contribute.

Crimes Against Humanity: The Dominant West's "Human Rights" Record

Fan Yew Teng

Only a book, rather than a short paper, can really do sufficient justice to such a vast and grave catalogue of crimes committed by the dominant West over the past 500 years. But a book can wait, when it is clear as daylight that some of the crimes are still continuing.

The Columbus trail

Two years ago, Spain, the United States and Japan took part in one of the most obscene shows in the history of the world: the celebration of the so-called discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Fortunately and fittingly, millions of people in the Americas, in Africa, and in Asia had the courage and solidarity to condemn and protest against the 500 years of bloodshed and domination sparked off by the first voyage of Columbus, whose name was Cristobal Colon.

1492 was a significant year in more ways than one. January 2, 1492 saw the formal surrender of Moorish Granada to Christian Spain. Under the terms of the surrender agreement, all the conquered Moors were to be allowed to remain in the territory and practise their faith, unless they chose to convert to Christianity or emigrate to Africa. However, ten years later, that agreement was abruptly abrogated by the Spanish monarchs Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon, and all Muslims were ordered to embrace Christianity or be expelled forthwith.

On August 2, 1492—one day before Colon set sail from Palos, the final deadline arrived for the expulsion from Spain of its entire Jewish population. Some 120,000 to 150,000 people were forced to flee from homes and lands their families had occupied for generations, in some cases for centuries, to take with them only their most immediate personal possessions but not, however, their gold, silver, jewels, or currency, which were to left behind for the Spanish crown and its agents. This anti-Semitic persecution by the Spanish Christians predated the first Nazi anti-Semitic persecution by 441 years. It was a reflection of the terrifying political and social climate in Europe at the time. In 1492, Europe was mired in the "culture of death" under which, as one writer says, "iniquity and evil have increased to the highest pitch". Joseph Grunpeck, the official historian of the later Hapsburg emperor, Frederick III, talks of "the miserable corruption of the whole of Christendom". Another historian, Johann Huizinga, refers to "the violent tenor of life" in the 15th century that was so pervasive—death was so daily, brutality so commonplace, destruction of the animate and inanimate so customary—that it is shocking even in our own age of mass destruction and widespread violence. And as Kirkpatrick Sale says in his *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy*, "On a higher level, there was the Church-sponsored violence known as the Inquisition, which went, methodically and heartlessly, after any variety of heretic or dissenter, reformer or mystic, attempting to do by the sword —or by the torturer's rack and the *auto-da-fe* what it could not do by word or prayer, under whose jurisdiction countless millions were imprisoned, by whose decree countless hundreds or thousands were killed. The Inquisition in Spain was the most brutal of all in the fifteenth century, in part because it was, uniquely, under the control of the crowns of Castile and Aragon."

And it was the crowns of Castile and Aragon, lest we forget, that sponsored Colon's voyages, in the name of God, gold and country, but more particularly, for gold.

As Sale reminds us, finally, there was the violence of nation-states such as Spain and England, just then forming in Europe, together with the many principalities, duchies, margravates, republics, etc. "To them, deadly violence was nothing less than the daily stuff of politics."

Or, as Machiavelli wrote a few years after 1492, "A prince cannot do all the things for which men are esteemed good, for, in order to maintain the state, he is often obliged to act contrary to humanity, contrary to charity, contrary to religion."

Triumphant technology of armaments

15th century Europe's other triumphant technology was that of armaments, made possible by the development of "corned" gunpowder from the 1420s and more sophisticated gun bores and firing mechanisms from the 1450s. With the invention of the arquebus sometime in the latter part of the century, allowing individual soldiers to have powder-filled weapons, and then with the perfection of mobile and large-bore cannon in the 1480s, allowing a fairly small army to have devastating and mobile firepower, the basics of modern mechanized warfare were established.

A final response of 15th century Europe to its bewildering circumstances was the growth of materialism and capitalism. This led to the cult of the worship of money and power.

The German historian Egon Friedell sums up the results of the next 500 years as of "that long unbroken Crisis of the European soul" expressing one of the most rudimentary, childish, and primitive periods in the history of the human spirit. Or as the scholar Frederick Turner has put it, the method by which "a world millions of years in the making vanished into the voracious, insatiable maw of an alien civilization".

For a foretaste of the horrors that Colon was about to unleash, let's consider an often neglected historical event. In the summer of 1492, Castile sent an armed expedition to conquer the island of Palma in the Canaries in the Atlantic Ocean, one of the last islands still not under the control of the Iberian monarchy. Like other expeditions before, this was to use the full force of European power to suppress and eliminate the Guanches, a people who had been on the islands for centuries, and to implant outposts for European agriculture and trade. The conquered ecosystem was also disrupted.

The Guanches, who once numbered between 80,000 and 100,000, after less than two centuries of conquest and settlement became extinct.

The age of conquest

As Kirkpatrick Sale has put it, Colon's voyage "was hoped to be, as it turned out to be, the start of a long, elaborate, and overt process of trade, conquest, colonization, and exploitation . . ." He adds:

> It would have been unlikely for such a culture to have achieved, for example,the power of ocean navigation and not to follow it with overseas possession and settlement; it could not have done as the Chinese, who launched several voyages of exploration as far west as the Persian Gulf and the east coast of Africa from1405 to 1433 and, after some initial trading decided there wasn't really anything out there superior to what they had at home and thereafter restricted their adventures to modest commercial traffic within the China Sea.

William Woodruff, in his *Impact of Western Man*, has summarised:

> . . . no civilization has striven as the West has done to direct the world according to its will; no civilization has known so few moments of peace and tranquillity.

Colon wrote of the first natives he met in what is today the Bahamas, "They bear no arms, nor are they acquainted with them, for I showed them swords and they grasped them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance". As Sale comments, "Thus did European arms spill the first drops of native blood on the sands of the New World, accompanied not with a gasp of compassion but with a smirk of superiority."

All the same, the natives—the Tainos—were fit to be servants and captives, and thus it was that Colon carried off some of them back to Spain. It was, as Sale points out, the birth of American slavery and European colonialism. Although Colon said he didn't see the necessity of constructing fortresses "because these people are very unskilled in arms", he built a fort all the same. As Sale says, "Such was the deeply ingrained militarism of fifteenth-century Europe, in which fortresses represent edifices more essential to civilization than even churches or castles."

The natives were not violent, but that did not mean that violence was not done to them, especially in the greed for gold on the part of the

Europeans, who carried the assumption that violence could buy obedience. As time went on, violence was increasingly employed by Colon and his men and by subsequent European imperialists. As the historian Las Casas tells us, "In this time, the greatest outrages and slaughterings of people were perpetrated, whole villages being depopulated . . ." It was war, slavery, and the mines. Surveys of Espanola (Hispaniola)—the name given by Colon to the island that is now divided into Haiti and the Dominican Republic—taken in 1508, 1510, 1514 and 1518 all show a population then under 100,000 and declining precipitously, through massacres and Western diseases.

Sherburne Cook and Woodrow Borah of the University of California at Berkeley, two leading researchers, have calculated the rate of population decline on Espanola after 1496; they have extrapolated from a curve going back to 1492, and come up with an estimate of the original population at just 8 million people.

The most detailed census, that of 1514, listed just 22,000 adults on the island (which Cook and Borah expand to 27,800 to include those officially uncounted: from 8 million to 28,000 in just over 20 years.

As Sale puts it, "That is more than decimation, it is a carnage of more than 99 per cent, something we must call closer to genocide, and within a single generation."

According to Las Casas, who was there at the time, by 1542 only 200 Tainos remained on Espanola, probably the last of the people anywhere in the islands. Within a decade or two of that, they were extinct.

Sale gives us a timely reminder of the proper perspective of the tragedy when he says:

> But it would be a falsification of history to let the matter rest there. It is important to realise that there is not a single European nation which, when the opportunity came, did not engage in practices as vicious and cruel as those of Spain—and in the case of England, worse—with very much the same sort of demographic consequences.

After the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, there was in Europe, according to Sale, the "unshakeable sense that on sea as on land the future lay in armaments, in military force however bloody". "It was," he continues, "the violent judgement of a violent age, and it infected

every policy and program of the nations of Europe, not excluding those conducted in the name of the Prince of Peace." The seeds of modern European militarism were sown.

England concentrated its military prowess on its "despised religious minority in the unconverted Catholics at home and the brutalized peasantry in Ireland." It had got rid of its Jewish population long ago—the official expulsion of the Jews from England was in 1290. From 1545 to 1625 the Royal Navy of England increased in both numbers and tonnage twofold. Sir Walter Raleigh was to declare: "Whosoever commands the sea commands the trade, whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself."

With this prize in mind, the Portuguese, English, Dutch and French rushed to the Americas. From 1550 to 1650, the rush was for the gold and silver mines of Mexico and Peru which had the richest deposits then in the world. It was a rush that was, as Sale points out, "with the same roughshod determination, the same mixture of bravery and cruelty, the same tragedy and triumph, as the first" under the Spanish. He explains, "Whatever the differences between English and Spanish forms of conquest, they were alike in their desire to emplace their own foreign populations, establish political and ideological hegemony, settle and control large stretches of land, effect military control over a subject people . . ."

It all led to the eventual decimation and scattering of the native populations of Central, South and North America and the islands now known as the West Indies. In North America, Sir De La Warr in 1610 unleashed what modern historian J. Frederick Fausz called "a brutal and atrocity-ridden four-year war of revenge reminiscent of campaigns in Ireland" against the Powhattans.

Just like the Spanish before them, the English and other Europeans began to dehumanize and demonize the Indians, terming them as savages and beasts. Historian Gary Nash puts it succinctly:

> To imagine the Indian as a savage beast was a way of predicting the future and preparing for it and of justifying what one would do, even before one caused it to happen.

Or, as Sale elaborates, "That meant, as with wild beasts anywhere: controlled, fenced in, confined to parks or reservations; broken and tamed, 'domesticated', brought to the restraints of civilized society; displaced and scattered, forced on to distant lands, with bounties on any who stayed too close; or exterminated, hunted down and killed outright on a regular basis and over a wide area."

"Those are," Sale adds, "precisely the four elements of the policy toward the native population of North America that the English, and their United States successors, followed over the next four centuries."

This assertion is amply substantiated in works like Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee;* Vine Deloria, Jr's *Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto,;* Hasan M. Rawat's *Slave Trade in Africa;* Susanne Everett's *History of Slavery;* Charles C. Royce's *The Cherokee Nation of Indians;* Heather Robertson's *Reservations are for Indians;* K.M. Panikkar's *Asia and Western Dominance;* and Alan Moorhead's *The Fatal Impact.* Human beings were not the only ones at the tender mercies of the well-armed Europeans. Consider, for instance, Bryan Hodgson's article "Buffalo: Back Home on the Range," in the November 1994 issue of *National Geographic,* which tells us:

- that the bulky, bearded buffalo—the American bison—was almost wiped out a century ago;
- that from an estimated 30 million buffalo in 1800, there were only about 1,000 in 1889.

European military dominance resulted in the destruction of the forest lands and the Indians who had lived there and the enslavement of first the red and then of the black, with the importation of some two to three million Africans to the Americas before 1740.

As Sale points out, Colon's voyages led to the destruction of much of the cultural heritage and the greater part of the people who produced it. It was "an act steeped in bloodshed, slavery, and genocide", and "a colonialism from which many nations still suffer." He argues that we should call into question "the nature of a civilization that could take the earth so close to ecocide."

Or, as Abee Guillaume Reynal, the French philospher and author of the four-volume study, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settle-*

ments and Trade of Europeans in the Two Indies, in the latter part of the 18th century, concludes, "the bold attempts of Columbus and of Gama" created "a spirit of fanaticism" for "making discoveries" in search of "some continents to invade, some islands to ravage, and some people to spoil, to subdue, and to massacre."

The "insatiable thirst for gold" had "given birth to the most infamous and the most atrocious of all traffics, that of slaves," the "most execrable" of crimes against nature, with the poorest states being forced to languish "under the yoke of oppression, and endless wars", while those who were "incessantly renewed" by Indies treasure "harassed the globe and stained it with blood."

The warrior society

Harassing the globe and staining it with blood came out of the idea that warfare was a cultural activity. The older army reserves would look back on their conscript days as the *rite de passage* which ushered them from boyhood to manhood. As John Keegan, in his *A History of Warfare*, tells us, "This *rite de passage* became an important cultural form in European life, an experience common to almost all young European males and, through its universality, its ready acceptance by electorates as a social norm and its inescapable militarisation of society, a further validation of Clausewitz's dictum that war was a continuation of political activity." He adds:

> Germans, French, British and Russians found themselves apparently fighting war for war's sake. The war's political objects—difficult enough to define in the first place—were forgotten, political restraints were overwhelmed, politicians who appealed to reason were execrated, politics even in the liberal democracies was rapidly reduced to a mere justification of bigger battles, longer casualty lists, costlier budgets, overflowing human misery.

Europe was turned into a warrior society. The wealth generated by the years after Napoleon not only paid for social progress but also improved a new and ingenious military technology. As the military historian Sir Michael Howard has said, when effective handguns came into general use at the beginning of the 16th century, the moral point was settled by technology for good. Hence the importance of military

technology right up to the 19th and into the 20th century.

The "bellicose Anglo-Saxons", as John Keegan calls them, have never forgotten this important lesson. Hence, the capacity and complexity of the European and American arms industries that arose in the 19th century had no parallels in former times.

The modern onslaught: the Pacific

A few selected cases of the military dimension of Western domination over the last two hundred years or so would suffice to show the repetition of the same tragic tale of conquest and despoliation, pillage and plunder, and radiation and pollution.

As Alan Moorehead tells us, the invasion of the South Pacific between 1767 and 1840 had a most devastating result on humans, animals and birds in the area. When Captain Cook entered the Pacific in 1769 it was a virgin ocean. Its inhabitants lived a life of primeval innocence. Seventy years later, firearms, disease and alcohol had hammered away at their way of life until it crumbled before them. The result was disaster, corruption and annihilation. What possible good, Diderot, the French encyclopeadist, had demanded, could be brought to the people of Tahiti by Christian civilization with its overload of guilt, its hypocrisy, its cold-climate strictures, its physical sickness and its ambition? He warned the Tahitians that one day the Christians would come, "with crucifix in one hand and the dagger in the other to cut your throats or to force you to accept their customs and opinions; one day under their rule you will be almost as unhappy as they are".

Even Captain Cook himself was eventually to write in his journal:

> . . . we debauch their morals already prone to vice and we introduce among them wants and perhaps diseases which they never before knew and which serve only to disturb that happy tranquillity they and their forefathers had enjoyed. If any one denies the truth of this assertion let him tell what the natives of the whole extent of America have gained by the commerce they had had with Europeans.

Moorehead points out, "In Cook's time there were probably around 40,000 people on the island. The missionaries in the Duff said that by the turn of the century not more than 15,000 or 16,000 were left, due to

wars, infanticide and disease. Bellingshausen in 1820 was given a somewhat lower estimate. By the end of the eighteen-thirties the figure was down to 9,000 it was eventually to drop to 6,000."

In 1966 the French exploded their first hydrogen bomb on one of the outlying atolls of Tahiti.

In Australia the aborigines fell back steadily before the English invasion. Moorehead tells us:

> They could not conform, they did not know how to adjust themselves to the new social climate that was closing around them. So far as the white settlers were concerned they were in the way, they were an obstacle to progress, they had to be removed. European diseases removed most of them, and violent death in their futile struggle against the settlers carried away a few more. The prostitution of their women to the white men led on inevitably to sterility or what was almost as bad, a race of half-castes who had no place either in the tribal system or the new European society. And when their own tribal laws collapsed the aborigines found they could not understand the new English laws by which they were governed, especially the law of property. They thought that their tribal hunting grounds were their own, and when they found that this was no so, that they owned nothing, that they had virtually no rights of any kind, that they were aliens in their own country, they were bewildered and resentful; and when all their protests failed they succumbed into listless serfdom.

Captain Arthur Phillip had estimated that there were about 1,500 aborigines around Sydney in 1788. By the 1830s only a few hundred remained. Charles Darwin, in 1836, found them still trying to live their tribal lives among the colonists' farms on the outskirts of the settlement, but there were practically no wild animals left for them to hunt. A few years later all that was left were a few aborigine beggars in the Sydney streets. This prompted Darwin to write:

> Wherever the European has trod, death seems to pursue the aboriginal. We may look to the wide extent of the Americas, Polynesia, the Cape of Good Hope and Australia, and we find the same result . . .

Moorehead points out that while in Sydney it had been a wearing away of the aborigines, in Tasmania it was "a wholesale massacre". It was a pogrom supported by the government. One John Glover said, ". . . the only alternative now is, if they do not readily become friendly, to annihilate them at once." And annihilated they were.

In 1830, Tasmania was put under martial law, a line of armed beaters was formed across the island, and an attempt was made to "drive the aborigines into a *cul-de-sac*." In 1835, the last survivors, only a couple of hundred of the original 5,000, were shipped away to the islands in Bass Strait. Within seven years their numbers were down to fifty. "The last pure-blooded Tasmanian died in 1876," Moorehead tells us.

Charles Darwin, who visited Tasmania during this holocaust, wrote, "I fear there is no doubt that this train of evil and its consequences originated in the infamous conduct of some of our countrymen." To Moorehead it was "a monstrous, unforgivable crime." He concludes bitterly:

> The place to be allotted to the aborigines in the new society was now becoming very clear. Only two alternatives lay before them: to resist and be killed or to submit and to degenerate into caricatures of themselves, street-beggars and useless hangers-on.

Government inquiries into the extermination of the natives were farcical. Count Strzelecki, the Polish explorer who was in Australia in the late 1830s, summed it all up as "an inquest of the one race upon the corpse of the other, ending for the most part with the verdict of 'died by the visitation of God'."

Or, as Moorehead has commented: " . . . you might just as well have asked the slave drivers of Africa or the settlers pushing out west in America to take pity on the tribes they were exterminating."

In the 1940s and 1950s, Britain conducted atomic weapon tests in Australia, including at Maralinga. From Woomera, an aboriginal reserve, as Moorehead reminds us, "scientists now send up into they sky great rockets which, if equipped with atomic warheads, would be capable of destroying civilization for many thousands of miles around."

According to *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age: The Hidden Human Cost*, the Australian government set up a royal commission of inquiry in 1984 into the effects of the tests. The commission concluded that "the tests had probably caused an increase in the level of cancer among the Australian population in general, and among Aborigines living near the test sites, and thousands of servicemen and civilians directly involved with the tests." It added:

> Overall, the attempts to ensure aboriginal safety during the 'Buffalo' series (September - October 1956) demonstrate ignorance, incompetence and cynicism on the part of those responsible for that safety.

Jane Dibblin, in her *Day of Two Suns: US Nuclear Testing and The Pacific Islanders*, tells us of the effects of radiation on the people of the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958, and how they were forcibly resettled as their own island became uninhabitable, and reduced to lives of poverty, ill-health and dependence. The US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, said: "There are only 90,000 people out there. Who gives a damn?" That's human rights for 90,000 people, compliments of the United States of America.

Poisoned Reign: French Nuclear Colonialism in the Pacific by Bengt Danielsson and Therese Danielsson tells us about French nuclear testing on the Moruroa atoll and the scandal of the bombing of Greenpeace's flagship the *Rainbow Warrior*.

And we should not forget about nuclear tests on the Bikini island, as well as how US nuclear tests had dusted radiation on Navaho shepherds and Mexican steel workers.

The modern onslaught: Asia

Four years from now—1998—will be the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Vasco da Gama of Portugal at Calicut on the west coast of India, having pioneered the direct sea route from Europe to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa. It led eventually to the imposition of a commercial economy on and the political domination of Europeans over almost all of Asia. As Claude Alvares and Teotonio R. de Souza point out, cumulatively, "they led to feelings of racialism and of European solidarity as against the Asians as a whole."

This was brought about by European dominance of maritime power over Asia. As K.M. Panikkar tells us in his *Asia and Western Dominance*, the armament of the Portuguese ships—carrying cannon—"was something totally unexpected and new in the Indian seas and gave an immediate and decisive advantage to the Portuguese over their Indian opponents."

Da Gama, even before he reached the coast of India, began to enforce the claim of his king to be "the Lord of Navigation, Conquest and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India". As Panikkar points out, without any warning Da Gama intercepted and destroyed any vessel he came across on his voyage. He introduced a policy of terrorism and piracy into Indian waters. And this policy soon spread to Southeast Asia.

As a prelude to European double standards on international law, a Portuguese official justified this policy by saying: "It is true that there does exist a common right to all to navigate the seas and in Europe we recognise the rights which others hold against us; but the right does not extend beyond Europe and therefore the Portuguese as Lords of the Sea are justified in confiscating the goods of all those who navigate the seas without their permission." It was piracy pure and simple, backed up by superior firepower.

However, Portuguese military superiority was soon superseded by that of the Dutch which in turn was to be superseded by that of the English. The military conquest of India enabled Britain to push her political and economic power into the Pacific and China in the 19th century.

In the second half of the 19th century, India provided a monopoly market for Britain during the expansive period of its industrial life. The Lancashire cotton industry enjoyed, through unfair tariffs against the Indian textile industry, a virtual monopoly in the Indian market. Panikkar says: "British monopoly interests in India were not primarily based on plantations. They rested on shipping, banking, insurance and the control of trade inside the country through the machinery of distribution . . ."

In the tea, rubber, coffee and indigo plantations, "the Indian labourer was no more than a chattel of the plantation owner. Labour contract was enforced by criminal law. Murders by plantation managers went unpunished, and the small European colonies assumed and enforced their own authority within the plantations."

The British rulers in India strutted around with frankly racist attitudes. Panikkar relates thus:

> One other aspect of British authority in India at this period was the conviction held by every European in India of a final and enduring racial superiority. Seton Kerr, a Foreign Secretary of the Government, explained it as 'the cherished conviction of every Englishman in India, from the highest to the lowest, by the planter's assistant in his lowly bungalow and by the editor in the full light of the Presidency town—from those to the Chief Commissioner in charge of an important province to the Viceroy on his throne—the conviction in every man that he belongs to a race whom God has destined to govern and subdue'.

Just another version of the arrogant ideology of "Manifest Destiny" that was then perpetrated in the United States.

Or consider the following declaration, unashamedly, of Lord Kitchener, the Commander-in-Chief of India:

> It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India. However well educated and clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank we can bestow on him would cause him to be considered an equal of the British officer.

Gerald W. Patton's *War and Race: The Black Officer in the American Military, 1915-1941* carries the tale of similar racist attitudes and practices. It says: ". . . when at all, possible, the general rule was that ranks above first lieutenant should be reserved for whites." It adds:

> When black officers and soldiers reached France, they encountered the importation of American racism. Discrimination was pervasive in army camps, and American military personnel were attempting to persuade the French people to adopt prevailing American attitudes and practices.

In view of the present era when many people talk glibly about human rights, it is perhaps pertinent to consider some glowing examples of human rights practice by the British Raj Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India, one of the earliest colonial

administrators who effectively established the British East India Company rule over Bengal. His main job was to raise money for the Company. According to Edmund Burke, an Irish conservative member of the British parliament, the following were some of the methods Hastings employed to fulfill his responsibility towards the Empire:

> Those who could not raise the money were most cruelly tortured: cords were drawn tight round their fingers, till the flesh of the four on each hand was actually incorporated, and became solid mass; the fingers were then separated again by wedges of iron and wood driven in between them. Others were tied two and two by feet uppermost; they were then beat on the soles of the feet, till their toe-nails dropped off.
>
> They were afterwards beat about the head till the blood gushed out at the mouth, nose, and ears; they were also flogged upon the naked body with bamboo canes, and prickly bushes, and above all, with some poisonous weeds, which were of a most caustic nature, and burnt at every touch. The cruelty of the monster who had ordered all this, had contrived how to tear the mind as well as the body; he frequently had a father and a son tied naked to one another by the feet and arms, and then flogged till the skin was torn from the flesh; and he had the devilish satisfaction to know that every blow must hurt; for if one escaped the son, his sensibility was wounded by the knowledge he had that the blow had fallen upon his father: the same torture was felt by the father, when he knew that every blow that missed him had fallen upon his son.
>
> The treatment of the females could not be described: dragged forth from the inmost recesses of their houses, which the religion of the country had made so many sanctuaries, they were exposed naked to public view; the virgins were carried to the court of Justice, where they might naturally have looked for protection; but now they looked for it in vain; for in the face of the Ministers of Justice, in the face of the spectators, in the face of the sun, those tender and modest virgins were brutally violated. The only difference between their treatment and that of their mothers was, that the former were dishonoured in the face of the day, the latter in the gloomy recesses of their dungeon. Other females had the nipples of the breasts put in a cleft bamboo, and torn off . . . .

> The fathers and husbands of the helpless females were the most harmless and industrious set of men. Content with scarcely sufficient for the support of nature, they gave almost the whole produce of their labour to the East India Company: these hands which had been broken by persons under the Company's authority, produced to all England the comforts of their morning and evening tea: for it was with the rent produced by their industry, that the investments were made for the trade to China, where the tea which we use was bought.
> (From James, S. Mill, *The History of British India*)

Warren Hastings was impeached by the British Parliament in 1788 during which Edmund Burke made a strong plea for his punishment. Not unexpectedly, he was acquitted in view of his services for country and empire—a vital consideration which must not be allowed to be inconvenienced by the torture of the natives. That was why General Dyer was lionized after the Amritsar Massacre in 1919.

Gunboat diplomacy

Before the end of the 18th century, tea had become a national beverage in England. And it was to pay for this immense investment in the tea trade that the East India Company encouraged the sale of opium which Warren Hastings had converted into another monopoly in India. And it was the opium trade that Britain insisted upon against the laws of China, though opium smoking was illegal in England itself.

China's "recalcitrance" over the opium trade could always be met with force. Lord Napier, who was appointed as the "Chief Superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China", recommended to Lord Palmerston, the British Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister, the policy of always negotiating with China under the threat of force. A "British merchant", in an article in the *China Repository*, offered this piece of advice:

> Nor indeed should our valuable commerce and revenue both in India and Great Britain be permitted to remain, subject to a caprice, which a few gunboats laid alongside this city would overrule by the discharge of a few mortars .... The results of a war with the Chinese could not be doubted.

And so it was that between 1840 and 1949, few years passed without British warships employing armed force in Chinese waters, according to James Cable in his *Gunboat Diplomacy: 1919-1979.* But it was not just the British. On 5 August, 1921, the US Navy established a Yangtse River patrol "to protect US interests, lives and property." On 6 December, 1923, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Portugal and the United States sent warships to Canton to protect Customs House (the Chinese customs were then under foreign administration) against seizure by the Chinese government. In September 1926, British warships inflicted severe damage on the city of Wanhsien with substantial casualties.

In 1926, 15 British, 9 US, 10 Japanese, and 6 French gunboats regularly patrolled the Yangtse River. These and other ships were constantly in action during that year. The next year British warships used or threatened force on the rivers or in the territorial waters of China on at least twenty occasions.

At this juncture it is necessary to remind ourselves that Japan and the Soviet Union (Russia) can actually be considered as part of the West both politically and militarily. As Keegan points out, from 1866 onwards, the Japanese took a conscious decision to learn the secrets of the West's material superiority and bend them to the service of their own nationalism, and succeeded in acquiring the transfer of the West's military culture.

In regard to the Soviet Union, as Professor Max Beloff says, in terms of intellectual and spiritual inspiration, it could be argued that both the United States and the Soviet Union themselves were offshoots of European civilization. This claim was amply proven by the rise of the Soviet Union as a military superpower, and its military adventures into Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia and parts of the Third World, notably Afghanistan.

It is significant that Japanese incursions into Manchuria and China in the 1930s did not worry unduly America and the European powers so long it was perceived that their own interests were not adversely affected. After all, it was Winston Churchill who said in 1925: "A war with Japan! Why should there be a war with Japan? I do not believe there is the slightest chance of it in our lifetime." The so-called Opium War in China also solicited interesting responses from prominent Americans. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions explained to the

American public that the conflict was "not so much an opium or English affair, as the result of a great design or Providence to make the wickedness of men subserve His purposes of mercy toward China, in breaking through her wall of exclusion and bringing the empire into more immediate contact with Western and Christian nations."

John Quincy Adams, the sixth US President from 1825 to 1829, said in a public lecture:

> The moral obligations of commercial intercourse between nations is founded entirely, exclusively, upon the Christian precept to love your neighbour as yourself . . . . But China, not being a Christian nation, its inhabitants do not consider themselves bound by the Christian precept, to love their neighbour as themselves . . . This is a churlish and unsocial system . . . . the fundamental principle of the Chinese Empire is anti-commercial . . . . It admits no obligation to hold commercial intercourse with others . . . . It is time that this enormous outrage upon the rights of human nature, and upon the first principles of the rights of nations, should cease.

This sort of self-serving moralising is not surprising in the least. The growth of America's inner and outer markets has, since the founding of the republic been associated with the use (actual or threatened) of military force in peace as well as war. As Professor William T.R. Fox has pointed out, "The United States Army in peacetime was through most of the 19th century, extensively used to aid in the winning of the West, and especially in the suppression of Indian opposition to the opening up of new lands for settlement. Navy and Marine Corps, beginning with their exploits against the Barbary pirates were also engaged in making it safe for Americans to live and invest in remote places."

Or as Mark Twain has said, in his novel *The Mysterious Stranger*:

> Next the statesmen will invent cheap lies, putting the blame upon the nation that is attacked, and every man will be glad of those conscience-soothing falsities, and will diligently study them, and refuse to examine any refutations of them; and thus he will by and by convince himself that the war is just, and will thank God for the better sleep he enjoys after this process of grotesque self-deception.

Consider how the "rights of human nature" and "the rights of nations" were bestowed on the people of the Philippines. About a century ago, the United States rushed to liberate the Filipinos from the Spanish, only to end up as their new oppressors. In the ensuing Filipino-American War, Filipino rebels were not entitled to the privileges of prisoners of war but rather "treated summarily as highway robbers or pirates." General Arthur MacArthur, the father of Douglas, proclaimed on December 10, 1900 that Filipino combatants and non-combatants could be punished collectively, including life-long exile. The exiles were the lucky ones, when we consider the fact that many prisoners of war were killed, and homes and whole towns were burned and destroyed.

Consider the testimony before a US Senate Committee by Brigadier General Robert P. Hughes, who was in command of the US Army's Department of the Visayas from June 3, 1899 to November 30, 1901:

> General Hughes: The destruction was as a punishment. They permitted these people to come in there and conceal themselves and they gave no sign. It is always . . . .
>
> Senator Rawlins: The punishment in that case would fall, not upon the men, who could go elsewhere, but mainly upon the women and little children.
>
> General Hughes: The women and children are part of the family and where you wish to inflict a punishment you can punish the man probably worse in that way than in any other.
>
> Senator Rawlins: But is that within the ordinary rules of civilised warfare? Of course you could exterminate the family which would be still worse punishment.
>
> General Hughes: These people are not civilised.

Another testimony tells us about how American soldiers meted out the water torture treatment to the Filipinos. All this was long before the Japanese tortures during World War II and the so-called pacification and "search and destroy" operations of the Americans in Vietnam.

Significantly, virtually all of the ranking American military commanders in the Philippines were veterans of the American Indian Wars which were often campaigns of extermination. US Secretary of War, Elihu Root, in an address to the US Army at the official end of the Filipino-American War, said: "Utilizing the lessons of the Indian wars, it (the army) has relentlessly followed the guerrilla bands to their fastnesses in the mountains and jungle and crushed them." A total of 126,000 US troops were employed in suppression campaigns.

The campaign in Samar was particularly ruthless. Brigadier General Jacob H. Smith ordered that Samar be turned into a "howling wilderness". When questioned by the Army's Inspector-General Breckinridge as to what he thought he was doing, Smith replied: "Killing niggers".

Smith's men later testified in court that he instructed them to kill and burn; that the more they killed and burned the better pleased he would be; that it was not time to take prisoners. When a Major Waller asked him to define the age limit for killing, he replied, "Everything over 10."

In the case of the Batangas campaign, the commanding officer, Brigadier General J. Franklin Bell, issued virtually identical orders. He authorised "the starving of unarmed hostile belligerents as well as armed ones".

Bell estimated that one-sixth of the inhabitants of Luzon died from the direct or indirect effects of the war, a figure approaching 600,000. By 1902, 90 per cent of the water buffaloes, the common work animal in the fields, had died or been slaughtered. The all-important rice crop had been reduced to 25 per cent of normal production. A severe cholera epidemic aggravated by the war had further decimated the population. During a revolt in Albay and other provinces in the Bicol region of Luzon in 1903, up to 300,000 people were driven out of their homes and concentrated in garrisoned towns. In an American attack on a hill-top fortress on Mount Dajo in Jolo in March 1906, over 600 Muslim men, women and children were killed. The US soldiers' contemptuous slang for the Filipinos was "goo-goos".

On November 1, 1901, the *Philadelphia Ledger* printed an American officer's letter which said: "Our men have been relentless, have killed to exterminate men, women and children, prisoners and captives, active insurgents and suspected people, from lads of ten up, an idea prevailing that the Filipino was little better than a dog." About 60 years later, this was repeated in Vietnam. And of course it did not start with the

Philippines. In 1866, US General William Tecumsch Sherman had written to General Ulysses S. Grant in this civilized and humanitarian vein: "We must act with vindictive earnestness against the Sioux, even to the extermination of men, women and children. Nothing else will reach the root of the case."

In order to reach the "root of the case", US President Harry Truman dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ostensibly to save lives that an invasion of Japan would involve, but more so for strategic Cold War reasons, as recently declassified documents in America show.

In order to reach the "root of the case", the United States committed the massacre of civilians in both North and South Korea during the Korean War between 1950 and 1953, especially by way of strategic aerial bombing. In three years, B-29s of the United States flew 21,328 combat missions and dropped 167,000 tons of bombs on cities, towns, villages, dams and farms. Over two million civilians in North Korea and about one million in South Korea were estimated to have been killed.

Just as in the Korean War, chemical and biological weapons were used in Vietnam, including dioxin, a highly poisonous chemical in Agent Orange. As Professor Howard Zinn has pointed out, by the end of the Vietnam war, "Seven million tons of bombs had been dropped on Vietnam, more than twice the total bombs dropped by Europe and Asia in World War II—almost one 500-pound bomb for every human being in Vietnam. It was estimated that there were 20 million bomb craters in the country. In addition, poisonous sprays were dropped by planes to destroy trees and any kinds of growth—an area the size of the state of Massachusetts was covered with such poison. Vietnamese mothers reported birth defects in their children." (For more details of aerial bombardment of Third World civilians, see my *Killing Civilians from the Air*, CenPeace,1994.)

The modern onslaught:Africa

About 400 years after the Portugese had established trading posts in the coastal areas of several parts of Africa, the French invaded Algeria in 1830 "in order to suppress piracy and stop slavery", ironical as that may sound. The French invading forces were led by the then French Minister of War, General Bourmont. In reality the French monarchists wanted Algeria to settle some former French aristocrats who were dislodged

during the French Revolution. In the elections, however, the monarchists lost and a dissappointed Bourmont went into self-exile. He was succeeded by a number of other generals to complete the occupation of Algeria and to conduct atrocities in that country, as well as to ruin the Algerian economy.

Despite the French penchant for claiming to be "cultured" and "civilized", they had no qualms about descending to barbarism. Consider a French soldier's narration of the situation in Algeria during the early phase of French occupation:

> . . . you asked me what happens to Algerian women we capture; some we keep as hostages and the rest are auctioned to the troops like animals.
>
> In the operations we have carried out during the last four months I have witnessed scenes that would melt the hardest heart if one had time to let them! I witnessed it all with a frightening indifference. Kill all men over the age of fifteen; take all women and children and put them on a ship for the Marquisas Islands or some other destination.

> The country of Beni Menseur is superb . . . we have burned everything, destroyed everything there. Oh, war! How many women and children who took refuge in the snow of the Atlas are found dead from cold and misery! Women and children, hooked into thick bushes which they were obliged to cross, surrendered to us. We kill, we slaughter; the screaming of the terror stricken, the dying, blend with the noise of the beasts which roar and groan from all sides; it is hell, where instead of fire that burns us, now floods us.

Another eye-witness account of the French occupation, of the Constantine region of Algeria:

> I stood on the edge of the terrifying ravines and stared at the sloping peaks over which thousands of men and women, trusting the abyss more than the mercy of the French victors, sought to escape. Their means of salvation were ropes attached to the upper walls of the rocks. When these ropes broke, human masses could be seen rolling down this immense wall of rock. It was a veritable cascade of corpses. (Both quotations are from Mahfoud Bennoune, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria*, 1830-1987.)

The invading French forces burned alive Algerian freedom fighters, after they had surrendered, on at least four different occasions between 1840 and 1844. During the Algerian War of Independence between 1954 and 1962, about one million Algerians were killed, out of a pre-war Muslim population of nine million, as a result of the "civilized" and "cultured" methods of the French. In the 30 years between 1870 and 1900, the European powers had parcelled out the rest of Africa among themselves to the extent that less than a tenth of its surface remained in the hands of its indigenous inhabitants.

In the late 1870s, Belgium's King Leopold II started the "scramble" for Africa by trying to set up a private empire in the Congo. In 1880, Italy invaded and occupied Ethiopia (Abyssinia). Otto von Bismarck, in 1883, annexed to the German Empire the Cameroons, Togoland and Southwest Africa (modern Namibia). The European powers at the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 agreed that no European annexation of African territory would be valid unless there was "effective occupation".

And so from there to "Rhodesia" and South Africa through racism, dirty tricks and divide-and-rule tactics. In Angola, the Portuguese were carrying out their own "historic civilizing mission". Richard D. Mahoney comments:

> Over the course of four hundred years, the Portuguese had colonized Angola with the contents of their prisons. The degredados were described by one observer in 1875 as 'the choicest specimens of ruffians and wholesale murderers . . . who rob and cheat and in a few years become rich and independent and even influential personages'. The readiest victims of the 'civilizing mission' were, of course, the Africans.

Be that as it may, US President Eisenhower was not unduly concerned about the victims of "civilization". On a visit to Lisbon, he hailed Portugal's "contribution to civilization", and listened sympathetically and respectfully to Dr. Salazar's appeal for US recognition of Portugal's stake in Africa. He assured that "we are united in a common cause". It was music to Salazar's ears of course.

In 1960, Belgium financially and militarily abetted the secession of the Congo's richest province—Katanga. And elsewhere in the Congo, Belgian troops had been brutal in achieving their military objectives. The Belgians had a long history in the exploitation of Katanga's wealth.

In 1900 Cecil Rhodes' mining giant, the Tanganyika Concessions, Ltd., was given a monopoly on mineral prospecting in Katanga, while Leopold II kept 60 per cent of the profits through his own corporate dependent, the Comite Special du Katanga. Subsequently, it was discovered that Leopold had a private chamber of horrors there. Hundreds of thousands of African workers had been mutilated, murdered, or driven to starvation during what Mahoney calls his "prolonged raid for the plunder of ivory and rubber" in the Congo, a fact that was substantiated by people such as Sir Roger Casement—who estimated that the Congo's population had fallen by 3 million in 15 years, and by Joseph Conrad, the novelist, in his *Heart of Darkness*.

In 1960, Katanga produced more than 60 percent of the world's cobalt; ranked fifth in the world in copper production; zinc, manganese, gold, silver, iron, germanium and cadmium were also mined. The single uranium mine in Shinkolobwe enabled the United States to construct the atomic bomb in 1943.

So when trouble, instigated by the West, broke out in the Congo, first the Belgians and later the CIA recruited Col. Joseph Mobuto to do their dirty work. In September 1960, the United States sent a naval task force which included two destroyers, two amphibious vessels, landing craft, and 500 marines.

Moise Tshombe of Katanga fitted very well into the Western scheme of things in the Congo. At the Bermuda summit in December 1961, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan told President Kennedy that regardless of Tshombe's "indecent dealings" with white mercenaries and Belgian business, he remained the West's bulwark against communism in the Congo. Or, as British Ambassador Ormsby Gore told US Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, Tshombe was pro-white, anti-communist, and dedicated to the preservation of European property. "Not such a bad chap," Gore insisted.

The British re-conquest of the Sudan in 1898 is another illustration of European "civilization". Major-General Sir Horatio Kitchener had the British government's approval to strike at the Sudan with an army 25,000 strong.

As George Warrington Stevens, a British reporter wrote, it was "less a battle and more of a full-scale slaughter". The courage of the Sudanese

was no substitute for the Lee Metford rifles, Maxim guns and howitzers of the Ango-Egyptian army. Or as Trevor Royle comments in his War Report, ". . . it had not been a battle but a massacre, the triumph of modern weaponry over the chainmail, swords and muskets of a bygone age". Kitchener also killed wounded Sudanese on the battlefield.

Killing surrendered or retreating enemy soldiers happened before the reconquest of Sudan; it happened again in the Gulf War of 1991. The Italians even introduced some rather unique ways of killing enemies. The Italians invaded Libya in 1911; on October 26 of that year, they rounded up thousands of Libyans and exiled them to some remote islands off Italy as collective punishment for their defiance. Up to this very day, little is known about how these people had lived and died. Italy has yet to decide on adequate compensation for the families of those forced into exile. In the late 1920s, the Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini—who was termed by Winston Churchill in 1927 as "the greatest law-giver" among living men, and by Franklin Roosevelt as "that admirable Italian gentleman"—sent his most trusted general, Rudolfo Graziani, to mop up the resistance in Libya. Graziani did so with brutal efficiency, by directing his men to bomb civilians. Another of his methods was to have Libyan freedom fighters who were captured "taken up in planes and thrown out", according to Peter Mansfield.

Between 1911 and 1943, the Italians killed more than 700,000 Libyans. This terrorism was hardly noticed by other European powers, let alone protested against.

The modern onslaught: the Middle East

The Arab revolt against the Ottomans ended in betrayal and domination of the Arabs by the Europeans who of course had their own agenda in getting rid of the Ottomans. A noted Arab educationist, A.L. Tibawi, has noted:

> While the Turks laid no claim to superiority over the Arabs in civilization, the Europeans did so with undisguised arrogance. For in their different ways the British, the French and even the Italians and Spaniards took it for granted that they had special insight into what was in the best interests of Arab subjects . . .

The infamous Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917 confirmed European imperialism's desire for new sources of raw materials and markets in addition to securing the lines of commercial and military communications. After the opening of the Suez Canal and the British occupation of Egypt, British strategic thinking was spelled out in a memorandum by the General Staff at the British War Office:

> The creation of a buffer Jewish State in Palestine, though this State will be weak in itself, is strategically desirable for Great Britain.

Thus, British imperialism was the midwife of Zionism. The discovery of oil in the Middle East later only helped to consolidate the West's calculation of the vital importance of that region and how it must be secured by military power if necessary, and assassination, coup, and intrigue if possible.

Rebel tribesmen in Somaliland were bombed into submission by the British in 1919; the same year the British also bombed Kabul and the Afghans to make them sue for peace. In 1922, British bombers quelled a revolt in Iraq, and the RAF soon assumed formal responsibility for controlling the whole area. Such aerial bombardment of civilians went right on to the 1930s. Consider what Lt-Col. Sir Arnold Wilson said in his anniversary lecture to the Royal Asian Society in London on June 8, 1932:

> . . . the pertinacity with which (notwithstanding declarations in Geneva) the RAF has been bombing the Kurdish population for the last ten years, and in particular the last six months. Devastated villages, slaughtered cattle, maimed women and children bear witness to the spread, in the words of the special correspondent to *The Times*, of a uniform pattern of civilization.

In the light of the above we see, therefore, the utter hypocrisy of the Western powers in wanting to "protect" the Kurds in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War.

And so it is that we see the true nature of the "even-handedness" of the West in the Arab-Israeli conflict over the last few decades, with massive military, economic and diplomatic assistance to Israel,

including the US$10 billion loan guarantee from George Bush in 1992 for Zionist settlements in the Occupied Territories.

And so it is that we saw the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978, which left the southern sector under Israeli control, after extensive Israeli bombardment of civilian targets; the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, establishing a puppet regime subordinated to Israel's interests and bringing to a halt the increasingly irritating PLO initiatives for a peaceful diplomatic settlement. As Noam Chomsky reminds us, "this merciless assault" left "over 20,000 dead, overwhelmingly civilians". In fact, more than 90 per cent of those killed were civilians. Not to forget the massacres in 1982 at the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, in which thousands, including women and children, were killed.

And, of course, not to forget the mass slaughter of more than 200,000 Iraqi civilians by the 43-day aerial bombardment led by American forces in 1991, and the trade sanctions which have killed and are killing thousands of infants and babies in Iraq. Not to mention the sanctions which are also killing innocents in Libya since 1992.

And today we see the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, brokered by the United States, in tatters, simply because, as a recent United Nations General Assembly vote has reminded us, the United States and Israel are not sincere about self-determination for the Palestinian people. Only the United States and Israel voted against self-determination. This is not surprising, considering the fact that Bill Clinton had said some years ago. "I will never let Israel down", presumably, whether it is right or wrong.

The modern onslaught: Latin America

Because we started with Colon's voyages to the Americans 502 years ago, it is perhaps appropriate that we return there in order to round up.

It could be argued that since the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1923, the countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean have been living, with a combination of awe and trepidation, under the shadow of the United States, their giant neighbour to the North. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt warned Europe to keep its hands off Latin America; by the so-called "Roosevelt Corollary" he justified direct US intervention in the affairs of Latin American

countries on the grounds that the United States could under certain circumstances act as the Western Hemisphere's "international police power".

It was under such extensions of the notion of "Manifest Destiny" that the US acquired Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines, and the Panama Canal Zone. And from there it graduated to flagrant interference in internal political affairs of Mexico in 1938; Guatemala in 1954; Nicaragua for the greater part of the 20th century; Chile by way of the overthrow of the duly elected Allende government in 1973; tiny Grenada by way of direct invasion; and Panama through military intervention in 1989; not to forget the continuous attempts over the past 33 years to invade Cuba, failing which to try and assassinate Fidel Castro and to destabilize the Cuban economy with trade sanctions.

As in other parts of the Third World, the CIA has been working overtime in Latin America, thanks to official American intolerance of trends, attitudes and policies which are not to their liking. For instance, two months before Allende was elected as the Chilean president, Kissinger, then Nixon's national security adviser, had warned, "I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility to its own people". That was not the first time that the United States had such contempt for the concept of free choice; it is not the last as demonstrated in the current Algerian case.

As for the tragedy of Chile, the Chilean Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda, summed it all up succinctly:

> My country has been betrayed more than any other in our time. Allende was murdered because he nationalized the other of Chile's subsoil: copper. In both cases, the Chilean oligarchy set bloody revolutions in motion. In both cases, the military played the bloodhounds. The English companiès in Balmaceda's time, the North Americans in Allende's time, instigated and financed these military actions.

What of the future? First there is the racist weapon of California's Proposition 187 against the Mexicans. The School of the Americas—a military training centre that has produced many Latin American tyrants and dictators—is still being operated by the US government at Fort Benning, in the state of Georgia. The school, called by a former

Panamanian president as "the biggest base for destabilization in Latin America", has relations with Banzer of Bolivia, Pinochet of Chile, Somoza of Nicaragua, and the leaders of El Salvador throughout its civil war. Graduates of the school include Manuel Noriega, General Lucas Garcia of Guatemala ruling from 1978 to 1982 (during which time 25,000 civilians were slain by his troops); Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, El Salvador's well-known death squad leader; and Major Joseph-Michel Francois, until very recently the Chief of Police in Haiti.

The victims of the graduates of the school include the following:

> El Salvador' Archbishop Oscar Romero, killed on 24 March 1980; Three American nuns and a Catholic lay missionary working among the poor of El Salvador, killed on 2 December 1980; Hundreds of unarmed Salvadoran civilians, including women and children, rounded up and shot by the military in December 1981; Six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and the housekeeper's 15-year-old daughter, massacred in San Salvador on 15 November 1989.

The military mindset

In his *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938*, Professor Stephen E. Ambrose points out that in 1939, the US had an Army of 195,000 men with an annual budget of less than US$500 million. It had no entangling alliances and no American troops were stationed in any foreign country. A half century later the US had a huge standing Army, Air Force, and Navy. The budget of the Department of Defence was over US$300 billion. The US had military alliances with 50 nations, over a million soldiers, airmen, and sailors stationed in more than 100 countries, and an offensive capability sufficient to destroy the world many times over. He emphasises that the US is a country that: "had come into existence through war, gained large portions of its territory through war, established its industrial revolution and national unity through a bloody civil war, and won a colonial empire through war."

Ambrose adds: "Technological change, especially in military weapons, gave added impetus to the new expansionism." In the US, the resulting growth of the armed services and their suppliers—the military-industrial complex—gave generals, admirals and industrialists new sources of power, leading to a situation in which Americans tended to

find military solutions to political problems. The attitude that "we have to prove that wars of national liberation don't work" is "a curious attitude for the children of the American Revolution to hold."

He reminds us, ominously, that "once American troops were stationed on foreign soil, the soil was included in the list of America's "vital interests". Korea and Vietnam are only two such examples.

A gleaning of the thoughts of some of America's leading political, intellectual, and military lights might help us develop a deeper insight into the mind and motivations of the remaining superpower. Consider the following sampling:

> "If America wills it so, and constructs several systems of overseas bases, the next war can be broken down into localized conflicts locally dealt with before they spread all over the world . . . Where is the American frontier now? There is no frontier. America fights around the globe." George Weller, 1944

> "We are now in a favourable position . . . We should get our bases now and plan not for 10 but for 50-100 years ahead." General Leslie Grovers, Head of the Manhattan Project, 1945

> "To my mind, the question to be decided is not whether we should or should not use atomic weapons . . . the question is rather when and how such weapons should be used. Should we, for example, in the event of war, begin by bombing major centers of population in enemy territory or start with smaller centers important for transportation or specific industries? This question should be answered not so much on the basis of humanitarian principles as from a practical weighing of the long-run advantage to this country." W. Walton Butterworth, Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, September 15, 1948

> "Limited nuclear war represents our most effective strategy against nuclear powers or against a major power which is capable of substituting manpower for technology." Henry Kissinger, 1957

Kissinger's advocacy, we may remember, came just a few years after both President Truman and General Douglas MacArthur threatened to use atomic bombs in the Korean War.

> "We have the ability now, right now, to destroy any enemy that wants to attack us or does attack us, regardless of what it (the enemy) does, or when it does it, or how it does it, or anything else." Admiral Arleigh Burke, 1960 "I can go into my office and pick up the telephone and in twenty-five minutes seventy million people will be dead." President Nixon, November 1973

Nixon had issued a nuclear alert during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The use of nuclear weapons was also threatened during the Vietnam War. "Deterrence is less effective than destruction in that it permits the enemy to retain a threatening force in being," according to US Navy Doctrine (1978)

> The worse-case scenarios of hundreds of millions dead and widespread destruction would be unprecedented global calamity, but not necessarily the end of history . . . One of the most important continuities of the nuclear era is that wars can still be fought, terminated, and survived. Some countries will win a nuclear conflict and others will lose, and it is even possible that some nuclear wars may ultimately have positive results (as World War II did). Reconstruction will begin, life will continue, and most survivors will not envy the dead." Herman Kahn, 1983 in *Thinking About the Unthinkable in the 1990s.*

These cold warriors who could chill our spines with their bloodcurdling assertions were of course succeeded by Ronald Reagan who wanted his Star Wars toys to demolish the "Evil Empire". No wonder as long ago as 1953 Nelson Mandela spoke up against such madness when he said: "We have been gagged because we emphatically and openly condemned the criminal attacks by the imperialists against the people of Malaya, Vietnam, Indonesia, Tunisia, and Tanganyika and called upon our people to identify themselves unreservedly with the cause of world peace, and to fight against the war policies of America and her satellites."

Even Jimmy Carter, before he became president, wrote: "As it has related to such areas as Pakistan, Chile, Cambodia and Vietnam, our government's foreign policy has not exemplified any commitment to moral principles." He also accused American leaders of having often indulged in "varying degrees of secrecy and outright lying". Of course

Carter himself, as president, was mollycoddling the repressive Shah of Iran. His successor Ronald Reagan aerial bombarded Tripoli and Benghazi by night on April 15, 1986, while Reagan's successor Bush awarded the commander of the USS Vincennes a medal for shooting down an Iranian passenger airliner, killing everyone on board, in 1988—a massacre which the US president said he would never apologise for on behalf of the United States, whatever the circumstances.

Is the Pentagon still insisting, as it did in 1992, that the US must always be Number One militarily? While under certain circumstances, humanitarian intervention may indeed by necessary, like in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti, we have to know what propels action, inaction, withdrawal of the big powers; and to know the reasons behind their benign neglect of events in Nigeria, Burma and Algeria. While we congratulate Bill Clinton—as well as Jimmy Carter—for their initiative to resolve the nuclear issue in North Korea, we must wonder about the state of Western encouragement of nuclear proliferation in Israel.

The Concorde can complete 448 trans-Atlantic flights in the time required for Cristobal Colon's first voyage. That is a technological quantum leap. However, other technological leaps have further sharpened the arms market, despite the end of the Cold War. The ratio of worldwide military spending, per soldier, to educational spending, per school-age child is 25:1. The chances that an arms sale to a developing country in 1993 was made by the United States: 3 in 4, compared to 1:2 in 1992.

Is gunboat diplomacy dead and gone in our post-Cold War era? Far from it. The relatively peaceful American gunboat diplomacy over Haiti was as much for the midterm US Congressional elections as the restoration of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The deployment of a US carrier battle group in the Sea of Japan in late September to bolster negotiations with North Korea was something more ominous.

Who is the new enemy?

The promised "peace dividend" that was supposed to come after the collapse of the Cold War is still as elusive as ever, under the so-called "New World Order". In the United States, right up to 1998, defence spending will still be as high as during the Cold War. According to Pulitzer Prize winning writer Tim Weiner, in his book *Blank Check*, the Pentagon's "black budget" reached US$36 billion in 1989; it has only

come down slightly since then. US$2 trillion had been spent on military "black projects" since the beginning of the Cold War—i.e. more than US$100 million a day.

Northrop Grumman Corp. and other defence companies are very pleased with the recent Republican take-over of the US Congress. They are planning to lobby for the building of more B-2 bombers, greater freedom to sell weapons overseas, the building of a third Seawolf submarine, the revival of the Star Wars project, and the development of the laser gun. So-called "non-lethal weapons", which some analysts say are being developed may not kill or maim, but they can still dominate and conquer.

Professor Samuel Huntington of Harvard is still hunting. After the utter demolition of his horrific social theories and schemes during the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s, he has now come up with idiotic conjectures of the clash of civilizations between the West and Islam, between the West and China, and between the West, and Islam and China combined. Such instigations will of course make the arms merchants in the West very happy. If we are not careful Huntington will succeed to hunt all of us into new cold and hot wars and destructive self-fulfilling prophesies.

Hunting with the hounds ...

Last but not least, we hope that some governments and leaders in the Third World will stop hunting with the Western military hounds and running with Third World hares, by helping to stage international arms exhibitions, becoming the West's catspaw by agreeing to produce their armaments and fighter planes under licence, and entering into secret military agreements on the provision of "access" and "facilities". For such acts are nothing short of collaborating in the perpetuation of our own reconquest by the big powers.

Political Dimensions of Northern Global Domination and its Consequences for the Rights of Five-sixths of Humanity

Jeremy Corbyn

The cradle of democracy and human rights

European governments quite often believe that their countries are the cradle of democracy and rights. Britain's claim is to be the "mother of parliaments", copied throughout the world, and European civilisation charts an unbroken course from ancient Greece through to modern capitalist democracy. In the words of a recent House of Commons Report: "The philosophical basis of modern human rights protection lies in the liberal democratic tradition of Western Europe . . . this can be traced back to both secular and religious roots in Greek philosophy, Roman law and the Judeo-Christian tradition. This is not to say that the concept of human rights is alien to other, non-Western, social and religious traditions."

It ought to be pointed out that Britain has an elected House of Commons, an unelected and mainly hereditary House of Lords and a monarchy who do hold some residual powers.

In fact, as Samir Amin and others have shown, the development of European democracy has been far from smooth and heavily influenced by its contact with Islam. Rights were won by pressure, initially to give freedom to the rising power of commercial and industrial families from weak but intrusive monarchical regulation, and then pushed forward by the growing demands for representation by the mass of people affected by the pace of economic change.

In the case of Britain, the people are "subjects" not citizens and the concept of this as a model for democracy is a little odd.

But the governments of the North continue to read back into their history a progress towards democracy that was both necessary and unique. They have not been shy to share Northern civilisation with other countries, firstly under imperialism, and then by selectively condemning the conduct of newly independent nations, and imposing sanctions and sometimes forcing to deliver these countries into the community of democratic nations.

But since its self-proclaimed "victory" in the Cold War, the North has found a new confidence in its values and is rehabilitating its right to impose them on other countries. In the extreme case this has led to military interventions: in the Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, and Panama, Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua. In the not so distant past, the Vietnam War and the murder of President Allende in Chile were all the product of an arrogant assumption of the right to intervene and impose an economic system.

In less violent form, Western aid is becoming increasingly conditional upon "good governance" and acceptance of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). In an article about developments in Russia, the UK Financial Times reported in March 1990 "a strong feeling in Washington... that providing assistance which would shore up the existing economic structures would be money wasted, and that the USA should wait for moves towards a free-market system".

During the 1970s, aid had been given quite freely by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to Russia's satellite states. Some like Romania resisted the temptation to build up significant amounts of debt, but others began the 1980s owing large sums to Western institutions. As Soviet power weakened, Northern institutions became more confident in the demands placed upon the debtor regimes, and after 1989 further lending became conditional upon the adoption of free-market neo-classical economic reform. The discretionary stance towards Russia in 1990 extended to Eastern Europe as a whole, where, in the words of one European Commissioner, economic assistance would have to wait until these countries had put in place the "economic preconditions of democracy" by which was meant extensive privatisation, cuts in government spending, and deregulation of economic affairs.

The same conditions have of course been placed on countries in the South by the IMF and World Bank. Nations now in debt through little fault of their own are held to have acted irresponsibly, lacking

appropriate discipline and experience. This must therefore be imposed from outside through Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) before further funds are lent.

British historian John Charmley, at the launch of his book on Churchill, made great play of Africa's current problems in order to justify a rehabilitation of Britain's imperial past: "The British Empire vanishing has had a very deleterious effect on the Third World," he argued, "You didn't get famines quite as frequently in Africa then as you do now."

But the view that the North has both a superior civilisation and the right to impose this culture elsewhere is both hypocritical and deceitful, misguided and narrow. It is hypocritical because the rights the North judges other nations to disregard, are not always respected in their own societies. It is deceitful because, frequently, the policy changes demanded by the North in order to defend these rights are actually intended and designed to defend the interests of the North. It is misguided, because Northern interventions are actually the cause of much of the abuse of rights in the South; and it is narrow because the agenda of Northern governments is dominated by a particular view of rights, giving priority to individual rights in a free market over rights to meet basic social needs, or to full and fair democracy.

Democracy and human rights in Britain

British democracy is sometimes heralded as the best in the world. As a country proud of its rights record, Britain is signatory to a number of human rights conventions, including the UN Declaration and International Covenants, and the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). But rights in Britain are quite severely strained and frequently infringed. In the 1980s, Britain had a government more confident than ever of its ability to act beyond the constraints of our conventionally respected and protected rights. The decade saw the abolition of London's elected local authority against the wishes of local people. It saw the removal of many of the rights of trade unions and restriction of free movement within the country of groups of miners during the 1984 miners' strike. Strip-searches were used against members of a women's peace camp at Greenham Commons, ironically accused of a breach of the peace for surrounding a nuclear base with enough atomic material in it to destroy the human race. There was extensive surveillance of anti-

nuclear and civil liberties campaigners and trade unionists by the secret service, and in Northern Ireland the press were banned from broadcasting interviews with representatives of the republican movement.

The government has secured several court injunctions to prevent publication of embarrassing material—most famously to stop extracts from *Spycatcher*, the memoirs of an ex-MI5 officer who claimed to have destabilised the government of Labour Party Prime Minister Harold Wilson. Investigations prompted by families and their support groups revealed several cases of wrongful imprisonment including the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and Broadwater Three—all convicted on the basis of forced confessions without corroborating evidence. At the same time, the Criminal Justice Bill has removed the right to silence under interrogation, making evidence from confessions carry more weight in the courtroom, and has restricted the right to peaceful protest. To cap it all, 16 million people have lost the right to free legal aid.

If its image were not tarnished enough, the UK only comes thirteenth in the ILO's ranking of countries implementing its conventions on labour rights and is well behind Cuba, Uruguay and Panama. In particular, the ILO committee have expressed concern at the breach of Convention 87 on rights to free association, after the government banned trade unions at the secret listening post in Cheltenham, GCHQ. As a signatory to the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the UK, under Article 11, is pledged to respect its citizens' right to an adequate standard of living. But in spite of its claim to be a modern capitalist democracy, where citizens are free, over 400,000 people are not free to have a home, and 8600 sleep on the streets. 5.5 million people earn a wage below what the Council of Europe regard to be a minimum standard of decency. In the twelve years from 1979-1991 the poor have become poorer, as average real incomes have risen 35% but those of the poorest tenth have actually fallen by 14%.

The whole economic strategy of the current British Government has been one of promoting an ultra competitive low-wage economy. The inevitable consequences of higher unemployment and increased dependency on welfare payments has been masked by adjusting methods of calculation of removing many from access to benefits.

When Gandhi arrived at the independence negotiations in Delhi, Churchill described him as the "half-naked fakir loping up the steps of

the vice-regal lodge to parley on equal terms with the representatives of the King Emperor". Gandhi was later to make a more eloquent critique of British democracy when he visited London. When asked what he thought of civilisation in Britain, he replied that he thought it would be a very good idea.

It would of course be wrong to completely disregard what has been achieved in the UK. There have been many important gains giving reasonable protection and security in many areas and defended by the right to cast governments out of office in a general election.

The history of democratic advance in Britain is one of popular demands being made and resisted by the British establishment; history is peppered with martyrs from the Peasants Revolt of 1381, the English Civil War, the Chartists of the nineteenth century and the campaign for women's rights to vote, which was finally achieved in 1929.

It would be extraordinary to believe that the rights currently enjoyed are the most British people can hope to achieve. The British democratic tradition is far from perfect and has a lot to learn from the experience of other cultures.

An agenda for perpetuating control over the South

The attempts by the North to dominate the human rights agenda are not only hypocritical but deceitful. There are many examples where pressure to "improve human rights and democracy" have concealed efforts to further the interests of Northern governments. The Gulf War which according to President George Bush was to do "God's work" and "save thousands of innocents" left well over 200,000 Iraqis dead, as well as dead soldiers on the coalition side. This was in the interests of controlling oil supplies and designed to reinforce the right of Northern countries to punish transgressors.

In many ways the Northern strategies have always been dominated by the need for control of primary resources. We are in the age of an increasingly desperate struggle for resources.

The proxy wars orchestrated by the US in Nicaragua and El Salvador, and the sanctions campaign on Cuba are justified by the need to defend democracy, but with little attempt to discover whether the local populations actually want the forms of democracy the US seeks to promote.

Economic policies of global domination and control

More damning still is the fact that rights abuse around the world is frequently caused or made worse by policies pursued by Northern agencies. Northern policy in such cases is at best misguided and at worst morally bankrupt. Northern governments support repressive regimes, and impose economic conditions which hinder economic development, destroy social and economic infrastructure, and have little regard for the local environment.

Perhaps the worst abuses are in Sub-Saharan Africa. The extent of the problem is now well known. Intervention by the IMF and World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes imposed harsh reductions in government spending and high interests rates. The outcome was de-industrialisation and a rise in poverty as social and economic infrastructures were gradually destroyed.

Today, 300 million out of 500 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa live in absolute poverty. Between 1980 and 1989, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita fell by 1.1% per year and the real value of the lowest wages fell by over 25%. Total expenditure on education in the region fell from $11 billion to $7 billion as education budgets were reduced by as much as 30%. Illiteracy has risen to around 50%, health care has deteriorated and child mortality has risen, in some cases by as much as 400%. The environment has suffered with an estimated 1.9m square kilometres of forest destroyed due to World Bank loans. At the end of all of which the World Bank in 1993 had made a profit of $1.1 billion. (This information is from "Darkness Visible" in *The Guardian*, 21st May 1994).

In Zambia, where inflation was reduced from 150% to less than zero, the IMF director, Michael Camdessus, described the change as "a remarkable achievement". But the price Zambia paid was real interest rates of 50%, a complete collapse in manufacturing investment, the loss of over 12,000 jobs in textiles alone, and a rise in child mortality from 5 to 20%. In the region as a whole, much of domestic manufacturing is now operating at below half capacity and inflation is starting to rise as a result of the chronic shortage of goods rather than high demand caused by irresponsible government spending.

On top of this, Africa has to deal with the outcome of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT)

negotiations. These were hailed as a great success by all Western commentators but a different picture is beginning to emerge as the agreement comes into operation, even before the World Trade Organisation (WTO) opens its operation.

Northern agencies themselves predict losses to Africa of around $2.6 billion. The African nations will lose some of their preferential arrangements with the European Union, and pay higher prices for food imports for temperate products from the North. At the same time, the removal of Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs) takes from governments the right to impose conditions on inward investment by transnational companies (TNCs). Perhaps on the plus side, the Uruguay Round has established a new World Trade Organisation (WTO) in which countries from the South will have 80% of the voting rights.

The WTO will have considerable power and could be a force for a Southern voice in multilateral trade arrangements. But bargaining power within the WTO will depend on how credible and damaging a nation's threat of unilateral trade protectionism can be made to appear. Such a threat will always be greater from the major trading blocs than from individual isolated nations, giving the major economies an effective veto over decision-making in the WTO. GATT therefore ring-fences African governments into support for generally liberalised trade, effectively removing alternative economic policies from political debate.

Trade liberalisation tends to benefit Northern transnational companies more than Southern economies: trade within and between OECD based TNC's accounts for 70% of the world total. Removal of TRIMS substantially liberalises the trading power of companies at the expense of countries allowing TNC's free choice over where goods made in the South are processed and sold, and giving enormous power to TNC's to affect national balance of payments accounts through internal movements of funds and components. For their part, while the nations of the South become open to free movement of capital by the TNCs of the North, the North is imposing tighter controls than ever on labour wanting to move to areas with high wages. When labour wants to relocate, it is labelled an economic refugee and accused of wanting to exploit the Northern economy for its higher wages and benefits, but the same logic is not applied in the North to TNCs wanting to relocate in order to exploit Southern economies for their lower wages and benefits.

The third element of Northern policy that has substantially affected human rights in Africa is the debt crisis. At the time of the default by Mexico in 1982, total debt stood at $550 billion. Since then, debt repayments to Northern banks have totalled $9950 billion, 20 times the original sum, and there is still an outstanding debt of $1150 billion. The total annual debt repayment of $170 billion dwarfs the total aid package from the main Northern donors of $50 billion, making the North net beneficiaries.

Britain itself receives some $2.5 billion more than it pays out in aid, but gave exactly the same sum in tax relief to British banks to insure them against the risk of default on loans to the South.

These harsh repayment conditions placed upon the South, combined with the effect of SAPs and GATT, have a number of effects on human rights and democracy.

Firstly, in many countries, any right to employment, decent housing, and health is effectively denied. In addition, those standing up for their rights can be harassed, imprisoned or killed. Last year 92 trade unionists were murdered, 1,000 attacked and 2,300 arrested, according to a survey from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the increase being concentrated in countries embarking on neo-liberal economic reform. This trend is compounded by anti-trade union legislation in northern countries, particularly Britain.

The right to a protected environment is also threatened. Northern policies intensify the need to exploit natural resources to finance development and debt repayment. The Carajas Iron Ore project in Brazil, and the Trans-Amazon highway both destroyed large areas of rain forest, but both were explicitly financed by the World Bank which continues to sponsor environment abuse, backing the planned Arun Dam in Nepal in virgin rain forest in the Himalayas. This is in spite of the fact that the World Bank is responsible for implementing the environment protection measures agreed under the Montreal Protocol and the Global Environment Facility.

The intellectual property sections of GATT have hindered technology transfer to poorer areas of the world and could have the effect of increasing Northern industrial power.

Disposal of nuclear and toxic waste is a very vexed question in the North and controls in the European Community and North America

have had the effect of encouraging the export of toxic waste to West Africa, or United States sewage waste to Central America where controls are minimal.

But perhaps most significantly, the conditions imposed on Sub-Saharan Africa, and to a lesser extent on Eastern Europe, have destroyed the social infrastructure necessary for democracy and rights to be protected or realised. Rights belong to people and not to governments or international agencies. Rights can be seen as claims rising from a particular tradition or society stating how people in that society want to govern and structure their lives.

Governments and agencies frequently regard rights as given by the contents of universal declarations and conventions. As such, rights are external to societies and people, alienated from people's actual relations to one another, objectified to the status of natural law, and then imposed by Northern international agencies or governments back on to populations in the name of liberation either from their misbehaving government or from their own ignorance.

The guardians of human rights

In this context, Northern countries perceive themselves as guardians of order, justified in controlling what they judge to be the inherent barbarism of non-Western peoples. Armed with this civilising mission, the North becomes Leviathan, protecting uncivilised people from themselves by imposing a Hobbesian international order, a model of Western absolutism discarded in Europe two centuries ago. "Bring Back Lord Kitchener?", asked the *Wall Street Journal* in 1992, keenly aware of the need to "avoid a world constantly diminished, and even threatened, by future Bosnias, Somalis, Haitis and Iraqs".

It is a matter for people themselves to judge which rights are of value and which not. It is not for Northern governments to set particular definitions of democracy and then to impose them on other cultures whether through economic sanctions or force. Central to any intervention to alter the system of rights in a country must be the support and as far as possible the control of the people themselves, difficult though this may be to achieve. The imposition of a particular view against the wishes of a population must always be wrong. Margaret Thatcher was keen on equating freedom and democracy with free market economics.

People themselves are not only the best judges of their rights, but, in the final analysis, they are also their best defenders. The abuse of rights and democracy, whatever their basis, comes about through the misuse of power. There are three types of power against which people might claim a right: the power of the state or public power, the power of the economy, and the power of social institutions or civic power.

In the modern world, economic power is vast. Multinational corporations can take decisions affecting large sections of a population, and the stranglehold of debt in the hands of the IMF and World Bank can be used to dictate policies to national governments.

Salvador Allende and Michael Manley both tried, in government, to challenge this huge undemocratic power. Allende paid with his life, Manley was ousted after his party refused the terms of the IMF loan needed.

Within nations, the power of the employer over the livelihood of employees can be used to keep wages low, and maintain poor and dangerous working conditions. In Britain, as in most of what was then imperial Europe, it was the abuse of private power that led to the formation of the labour movements at the end of the last century. Interestingly, the sense of international purpose in their activities was obvious and great, perhaps greater than now in the northern trade union movements.

Those who felt coerced by big business turned to governments to act on their behalf as a counter balance to the industrialists. The ballot box would become a source of power for the electorate to put in office governments committed to defending what working people perceived to be their rights in the workplace. But when the labour movements first appeared, voting rights were limited to the fraction of the population who owned property. Democracy therefore had to be fought for against a ruling elite.

This democracy in Western Europe is centred on parliamentary demands, not on industrial democracy. Democracy must be more than just elections.

Democratic rights and expression are constantly under threat, and in all industrial societies the rapid economic changes of the past twenty years have created a poor and dispossessed "underclass" on top of the systematic discrimination against minority ethnic communities.

But nonetheless, rights were developed as claims, made by people organising outside the structures of government. The rights secured required the government to defend its citizens both against abuse of economic power and against the abuse of constitutional power by the state itself. Today it remains the case that these rights can only be defended by a vibrant, well-resourced and well-organised civic culture which can monitor the activities of the state and business and allow people to organise and represent their claims upon them.

Democracy is to be both judged and defended by the people on the ground affected by the operation of power within their society. But, in this context, the policies promoted by the North over the last fifteen years have done very little to support democracy and rights. It is quite inadequate, on the one hand, to tie aid both to Africa and Eastern Europe to criteria of good governance and democratic reform, when at the same time, the totality of Northern policy both denies the need to consult with local civil society on the nature of democratic reform, and, moreover, systematically destroys the basis for vibrant civil society through harsh economic repression.

A vibrant civic culture is unlikely to arise when governments can no longer provide basic education and health, and when communications and transport are breaking down, and the reduction in incomes of 50 per cent in the last ten years can only have pushed more people to turn to crime or to enlist in private militia. The fracturing of the economy in Africa has resulted in a parallel fracturing of the social fabric. In such circumstances, it is not perhaps surprising that centralised states and big businesses come to dominate atomised and isolated social fragments, too disorganised and demoralised to defend their own democratic rights, or that as other social identities decline—membership of community associations, trade associations, producer co-operatives—the dominant form of reaction to circumstances becomes ethnic conflict.

A genuine approach towards human rights

If the North is serious about supporting (and not imposing) the development of human rights and democracy, then it must realise that is not enough just to be tough on rights abuse. There should be an equally tough approach to the causes: weakened civic cultures; devastated economies which limit government spending on social infrastructure; and

continued Northern support for repressive regimes. In addition, people need to be given as much control as possible over their own affairs—and that includes economic policy. It is of no use, on the one hand, to impose economic policy on a population from outside, while at the same time complaining about the lack of democracy in their country.

What is needed from the North is less action after the event to impose a New World Order on the perceived chaos, and far more responsibility to be taken for the disintegration of societies in the first place. After all, the only New World Order worth anything, will be one which can prevent populations in half the world starving while the other half has food to burn.

None of this means that criticism of one country by another is invalid or in some sense hopelessly relativistic. There is a way to judge between different traditions of rights and cultures, and that is for people themselves at the grassroots to decide whether and how to implement reform. If governments in a particular country are actively repressing pressure for democratic reform coming from their own people, then international partnership with supporting civic movements around the world can play an essential part in applying pressure for change. South Africa is a clear example of how dramatic change can be won by popular movements co-operating internationally in support of the popular internal movements.

In general there is a need for a more inclusive international approach to the question of human rights. To achieve this requires changes:

- The international community should better reflect the rights of the peoples' of the South in its institutions by proper representation in the structures of the UN and by bringing the World Bank and IMF under real UN control; there needs to be an acknowledgement that perceptions of rights may differ, that different cultures will give weight to some areas over others, and that this is a matter for dialogue between people.
- The North needs to recognise that Northern culture is not a model of civilisation that countries of the South should be forced to emulate, and that what is required is an open, and informed debate between parties meeting on equal terms.
- Where sanctions are imposed they should be both peaceful and targetted against those guilty of the abuse, not against the population as a whole—particularly since this will weaken that part of society capable

of sustaining democracy. Any action should be pursued as far as possible through international cooperation between both governments and representatives of civil society.

- Any attempt to condemn the rights record of another state, in contrast to the current practice of the North, should recognise the need not only to attack rights abuse but also its causes.
- The impact of economic power on rights is enormous and the moral superiority of the North has to be balanced against its pursuit of economic domination of the poor of the world.
- The debate about rights suffers because rights are seen as given, set in conventions and declarations decided by the leading countries of the North. They then justify intervention to restore "order" to situations which are largely of their own making. What is needed is to return control of the basic governing principles by which societies are run to the populations whom they affect. This includes the governing principles of the economy. To a far greater extent than democratic rights, economic relationships have been taken out of people's control and are now held above them as immutable facts discovered by social science and interpreted by the contemporary oracles of the stock exchange.

The economy is a collection of human institutions, and like systems of democracy and rights, has been fashioned by institutional developments throughout history; developments which have been under the control of people who stood to gain from them.

Capitalism has been successful because it has developed considerable power, not because it offers people the best or most worthwhile life. After all, if Western capitalism always has been so demonstrably superior, why did it feel so threatened during the cold war years, or by small Central American or Southeast Asian states experimenting with alternatives?

Northern Domination of the Global Economy and Some Human Rights Implications

Martin Khor

Economic transnationalisation and globalisation

Transnationalisation. In the half century since the end of the Second World War, the process of global economic domination by a few entities has accelerated. These entities are the transnational companies, the Northern governments that generally act in their interests, and multilateral agencies that are in turn dominated by these governments. As Frederic Clairmont has shown, where a multinational company used to dominate the market of a single product, a big transnational company (TNC) now typically produces or trades in an increasing multitude of products, services and sectors. Through mergers and acquisitions, fewer and fewer of these TNCs now control a larger and larger share of the global market, whether in commodities, manufactures or services.

In most Third World countries, transnational companies have come to play an increasingly important role. Some governments have imposed various forms of control and regulation over these companies, but in recent years many of these governments have been competing with one another to attract these foreign firms to invest in their countries. Some of the local business elite, and many small local firms, compete with the TNCs and their products; while others work in collaboration with and have themselves profited from these big companies. But irrespective of an individual government's or a people's attitude and desired policies towards these companies, there are now limited options for the Third World in determining national policies affecting different aspects of TNC behaviour. This is due to recent developments such as the Structural Adjustment Programmes(SAPs) as well as the recently concluded Uruguay Round (UR).

In order to oil the wheels of their business machine and to get a competitive edge over rivals, TNCs routinely bribe governments. Many Southern governments are thus seen, correctly, as corrupt, and some political leaders have been known to amass up to several billions of dollars in overseas bank accounts. But the phenomenon of politicians receiving bribes is by no means restricted to the South. Recent scandals in Italy, Japan, France and Britain reveal that Northern government leaders and politicians have also been heavily corrupted by their corporations. Corporation influence over state policies seems therefore to be a universal phenomenon.

GLOBALISATION. This process of "transnationalisation" is accompanied by another trend, the "globalisation" of national economies. Firstly, Third World countries are more and more subject to the pulls of the world market economy. Secondly, crucial areas of economic policy making, that once were within the domain of national governments in the South, have increasingly come under the control of foreign (Northern) governments or of international financial, trade and economic organisations controlled by Northern governments and acting in favour of transnational companies and banks.

This globalisation of national economic decision-making has been boosted by Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) imposed by the World Bank and IMF on indebted Third World countries as a condition for debt rescheduling since the 1980s; and by the Uruguay Round agreement [under the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) auspices] that was signed in April 1994. The implementation of these agreements in future years will greatly extend and accelerate the globalisation process. As this process is dominated and dictated by major industrial countries, they are able to make use of it to further subject the functions of the Southern economies to the interests of the North.

Southern dependence and South-to-North resource outflows

In the colonial period, the colonised territories had their economies distorted to serve the requirements of the colonial master countries. The former became economically dependent on the latter and on the international market. This dependence supplanted the previous basic

self-sufficiency of many of the colonised territories, and took many forms, including dependence on investments, trade, finance and technology.

In the post-colonial period, despite political independence, most Third World countries are still economically dependent (and even more so) on Northern countries, their TNCs and institutions. Each form of dependence is associated with specific mechanisms whereby the Southern countries have substantial funds and economic resources transferred abroad. The South-to-North outflow of resources far outweighs the North-to-South "aid" (a large part of which consists of loans that have to be repaid anyway).

Recent South-North outflows are very large, in fact constituting a financial haemorrhage, and at present probably exceeds US$500 billion annually. These outflows arise from the South's adverse position in the international structures of trade, finance, technology and distribution.

The following summarises the mechanisms and magnitude of dependence and resource outflows :

International trade and terms of trade

Many Southern countries still mainly export raw materials and import manufactures. Their terms of trade have declined on a continuous basis for decades. The latest years have been disastrous. Between 1980 and 1992, the index of non-fuel commodity prices fell from 171 to 115, while that of manufactures rose from 116 to 164. The terms of trade of commodities vis-a-vis manufactures fell from 147 to 71, or by an incredible 52%.

The effects on lost export earnings and incomes are devastating. For Sub-Saharan Africa, already the poorest region, the terms of trade (using 1980 as base year) dropped by 28% between 1980 to 1989. This caused an income loss of US$16 billion in 1989 alone, or equivalent to 9.1% of the region's combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the four years 1986-89, the region suffered a total $55.9 billion income loss due to terms-of-trade decline, or 15-16 per cent of GDP.

For another category, 15 middle-income highly indebted countries, the terms of trade also fell by 28% between 1980 and 1989, causing an income loss of $45 billion in 1989 alone, equivalent to 5.6% of combined GDP. In 1981-89, the total income loss from terms-of-trade decline was $247.3 billion. There were also other kinds of net financial transfers from

these 15 countries arising from investments, debt repayment and aid flows, amounting to $35 billion in 1989. Thus, combined with the $45 billion lost the same year due to terms of trade decline, the 15 countries lost $80 billion that year, or 10% of the GDP.

The terms-of-trade income losses from Sub-Saharan Africa and the 15 indebted middle-income countries were together $61 billion in 1989. For the South as a whole, the losses would be much greater, if account is taken of the other countries, as well as if a base year earlier than 1980 were to be taken (since real commodity prices have been falling since the 1950s).

According to Augustin Papic, a member of the South Commission, transfers from the South due to terms of trade losses total $200 billion a year.

External debt and debt servicing

External debt has been another major source of financial drain from the South. The inability of many Southern countries to meet their debt obligations is due to many factors. Undoubtedly domestic factors played an important role, including the proliferation of economically unfeasible and socially inappropriate projects, financial mismangement, and corruption of political leaders. The problem was, however, also largely induced by international factors beyond the control of the indebted countries, including the deterioration of commodity prices and terms of trade (with such devastating effects as we have seen), the increase in interest rates in the 1980s, and changes in relative currency rates. Thus, most Southern indebted countries were victims of an "unfavourable external economic environment" which in many cases turned what would have been a problem into a crisis.

Debt servicing of capital-importing developing countries rose from $90 billion in 1980 to $158 billion in 1992. In 1980-92 total debt servicing was $1,662 billion (comprising $771 billion in interest payment and $891 billion in principal repayment).

Despite these astronomical repayment amounts, the South has not cleared its debts. Instead, the countries concerned have ended up with still more debt. Their total external debt rose from $567 billion in 1980 to $1,066 billon in 1986 to $1,419 billion in 1992. The tragic scenario can be gauged from the following. In 1980 the capital-importing developing

countries had $567 billion in debt. Over the next 12 years they borrowed another $1,743 billion, but much of this was used to meet debt service obligations (as debt service flows totalled $1,662 billion). As a result, the countries had an even much larger debt stock of $1,419 billion which will require even larger debt servicing outflows in the future.

It would appear that the more you borrow, the more you have to repay, and in order to repay you have to borrow more. Caught in this vicious cycle, the South which has already paid for its debts yet has still heavier debts to clear. The effects have been devastating, as countries have to divert such a large part of their government budgets and national incomes to debt servicing, and are thus deprived of the means to fulfil their basic needs.

Moreover, the need for debt rescheduling (to avoid default) puts the indebted countries in a vulnerable position of having to accept conditionalities (particularly structural adjustment policies) attached to the World Bank's new loans.

Payments for trade, transport and distribution

TNCs dominate international transport and distribution of goods and derive an overwhelming share of the final price of the products. Since freight charges are high, South countries forgo a substantial part of their export earnings. Southern producers receive only 10-15 per cent of the final retail price of their commodities when sold to Northern consumers. The South has weak capacity in shipping, insurance and marketing and thus payment abroad for these services is a big drain on foreign exchange and income.

Outflows of foreign profits

The inflow of foreign investment is usually considered a source of capital to the South. However, it can also be a major source of outflows through the repatriation of foreign firms' profits and dividends. Profit outflow may eventually be more (and even much more) than new investment inflows. In 1980-92, the net outflow of profits and dividends by foreign firms totalled $122 billion and averaged $9-11 billion annually. Between 1980-86, profit outflow exceeded new investments by $15.5 billion. However, due to an increase in foreign investment in a limited number of developing countries, investments in 1987-92

exceeded profits by $48 billion. The increased foreign investment inflow (especially since 1991) will, however, eventually lead to a corresponding rise in the annual stream of profit outflow.

There are also "hidden" forms of profit outflow that are not captured in these statistics. Many foreign firms practice "transfer pricing" to escape tax or (in the case of joint ventures with local firms) to reduce the profit share accruing to the local partner. Through determination of prices, the foreign firm over-invoices the inputs it imports from its branches in other countries and under-invoices for outputs it exports to them, thus artificially underreporting its real profits. A large part of these real profits are thus transferred to its head office or other branches.

The volume of such profits is very high. A United Nations Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) study estimated that drug TNCs charged their Latin American subsidiaries 33 to 314 per cent above world prices for the inputs they provided. An earlier study showed Colombian subsidiaries of drug TNCs were overcharged by 155% and the average profit rate of foreign drug firms was actually 79% and not the 6% reported. In 1986, foreign-based multinational firms reported combined net losses of $1.5 billion to the US tax authorities. However, the tax authorities estimated tax losses from foreign-based multinationals to be $20-30 billion on account of transfer pricing, with another $5 billion lost from US multinationals.

Royalties and technical payments

Dependence on foreign technology, coupled with intellectual property rights laws suited to the North, is another major source of resource outflow from the South in the form of royalties, license fees for technology used and "technical fees" paid by a foreign firm to its overseas headquarters. Again, these forms of outflow can exceed the narrowly defined foreign profit. A UNCTAD study in 1981 estimated that payments by developing countries for using patents, licenses, trade marks, process know-how were $9-10 billion a year. Including other indirect costs, such as transfer pricing, the total cost of technological dependence may be $30-50 billion annually, according to the report.

Since the study in the early 1980s, the outflows from the South due to technical payments and transfer pricing must have increased far above $30-50 billion annually. These payments can be expected to rise

when the Uruguay Round accord on TRIPS is implemented, as South countries would then have to introduce or upgrade their intellectual property rights laws to the higher standards of the US.

Brain drain and capital flight

Many Southern elites prefer to migrate to the North, or to park their wealth in the form of money or fixed assets in foreign (usually Northern) countries. These, of course, are a drain on Southern human and capital resources.

A 1882 UNCTAD study found that industrial countries gained $51 billion of human capital from 1961 to 1972 due to migration of professionals from the Third World. The US, Britain and Canada transferred $46 billion in development aid in that period but received $51 billion of human capital due to the brain drain.

Capital flight is also a massive problem. IMF data showed that the annual capital flight from 13 highly indebted countries was $180 billion in 1988, much higher than the $47 billion in 1981.

Losses from foreign exchange changes

Many Third World countries have suffered massive losses due to changes in the exchange rates of major currencies. Sometimes these changes are induced by decisions of major countries acting individually or collectively. Yet developing countries are not consulted, although these decisions may have such a devastating impact.

A Third World country may hold its reserves (or part of it) in a certain currency. The fall in value of that currency can cause major losses to Third World countries, as when the sterling fell sharply in 1993. When major currencies appreciate, countries holding debt stock in these currencies will find the level of their debts (in terms of local currency) would have risen, and it would take more in terms of local currency to service the debt. This has happened recently when the sharp appreciation of the yen led to a significant increase in debt in Southeast Asian countries. Japan would not agree to renegotiate debt repayment terms despite the fact that the increase in debt stock was due solely to factors beyond the control of the developing countries. Earlier in 1994, many poor countries in Africa suffered great losses when the French franc, to which their currencies are tied, devalued.

The World Bank, IMF, structural adjustment and human rights

The World Bank and IMF have been used by Northern governments as instruments to maintain control of the world financial and economic system. The debt crisis was an opportunity for these institutions to impose structural adjustment programmes (SAPS) on indebted developing countries that needed debt rescheduling. Analysts like Susan George and Walden Bello have argued that the Bank and Fund used debt repayment problems as a leverage to "discipline" the South. The debt crisis weakened the South's ability to press ahead with the New International Economic Order movement, and the Northern banks, backed up by their governments and the Bretton Woods institutions, mercilessly devised ways to extract as much debt repayment (with interest) as possible, instead of equitably sharing the loan losses between the creditors and borrowers.

Structural adjustment thus had two roles: to restructure the economies of developing countries so that they can better save foreign exchange to service their debts; and to alter the fundamental macroeconomic and eventually social policies of countries of the South into a single "monocultural" *laissez-faire* economic model that would be compatible with the long term requirements of the Northern-dominated world economy.

The advent of the SAP approach coincided with the economic reforms of Reagan and Thatcher in the US and the UK, that included deregulation, privatisation, cutting welfare and social expenditures, tax reductions for the rich and businesses, a rolling back of the principle of state responsibility in providing for the needs and welfare of citizens. Financial stability (and minimising inflation) took precedence over providing employment in macroeconomic priority setting.

Structural adjustment was the mechanism for transferring the Reagan-Thatcher economic model (which has had such damaging effect on the poorer and middle-class sections of the UK and US populations) to the South. SAPs forced Southern governments to reduce the role of the state in the economy and in social services, to cut public spending (especially in the so-called non-productive social sectors such as health and education and for food subsidies), to retrench public-sector staff, impose a

freeze on wages and free prices from controls, to deregulate, and to liberalise externally (emphasise exports rather than production for the local market, reduce import tariffs, and liberalise the terms of foreign investment).

Many countries undergoing SAPs have suffered a drastic decline in incomes, on average by 15% in most of Latin America and 30% in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1980s. Investment per capita fell 75% in Africa and 40% in Latin America during the 1980s while in the 42 poorest countries, health spending fell by over 50% and education spending by 25%. Infant and child mortality rates rose in many countries. During the 1980s, the numbers of the absolute poor increased in developing countries as a whole and in Africa they also increased relative to the total population.

A brilliant analysis of the effects of SAPs has been made by the Canadian economist Michel Chossudovsky, who has conducted case studies on the impact of SAPs in many countries and who is one of world's leading economic experts on SAPs. He concludes:

> Structural adjustment is conducive to a form of "economic genocide" which is carried out through the deliberate manipulation of market forces. When compared to genocide in various periods of colonial history, its impact is devastating. Structural adjustment programmes directly affect the livelihood of more than four billion people.
>
> The application of SAP in a large number of countries favours the "internationalisation" of macroeconomic policy under the direct control of the IMF and World Bank acting on behalf of powerful financial and political interests (for example, the Paris and London Clubs, the G-7). This new form of economic and political domination (a form of "market colonialism") subordinates people and governments through the seemingly neutral interplay of market forces.
>
> The Washington-based international bureaucracy is entrusted by the international creditors and multinational corporations with the execution of a global economic design which affects the livelihood of more than 80% of the world's population. At no time in history has the free

> market, through the instruments of macroeconomics operating at a world level, played such an important role in shaping the destiny of "sovereign" nations.
>
> The restructuring of the world economy under the guidance of the Washington-based financial institutions increasingly denies individual Third World countries the possibility of building a national economy; the internationalisation of economic policy transforms countries into open economic territories and national economies into "reserves" of cheap labour and natural resources. The application of the IMF economic medicine tends to depress world commodity prices further because it forces individual countries to gear simultaneously their national economies towards a shrinking world market.

The implications of SAPs for human rights has been studied in detail in another outstanding report prepared for the UN by the Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur, Danilo Turk. He notes that all states possess varying degrees of legal obligations to fulfil economic, social and cultural rights. These rights are interdependent with and are as legal in nature as civil and political rights.

He adds, "The increasing integration and internationalisation of the global economy, as well as political and social structures and processes, increase the importance of international co-operation and responsibility. Never before have the actions of State X had as much real or potential impact upon State Y than at present. This obvious yet underemphasised fact, and in particular the relevance thereof to the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights within the human rights framework, must be consistently addressed."

Turk's report provides details on how SAPs have led to the denial of development, and on the negative impact of adjustment on the realisation and enjoyment of selected economic, social and cultural rights. In particular, the report records how harm is done to the realisation of:

- the right to work;
- the right to food;
- the right to adequate housing;
- the right to health;
- the right to education;
- the right to development;

Turk quotes the conclusions of the UN Global Consultation on the Realisation of the Right to Development as a human right:

> Transfer of control of resources located in developing countries to interests in the developed countries, which intensified in the 1980s, is another obstacle to development. Similarly, the growing burden of indebtedness and structural adjustment falls heaviest on the poorest and weakest sectors of society and has clear human rights implications. Failure to take into account the principles of the right to development in agreements between States and the World Bank, IMF and commercial banks with regard to external debt repayment and structural adjustment frustrates the realisation of the right to development and of all human rights. The prevailing terms of trade, monetary policy, and certain conditions tied to bilateral and multilateral aid, which are all perpetuated by the non-democractic decision-making processes of international economic, financial and trade institutions, also frustrate the full realisation of the right to development.

The Uruguay Round and GATT/WTO

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round (UR) was heralded in the mainstream global media as a major triumph for the international economy and a boon for all countries. It is clear however that the results are at best mixed for some developing countries and for many others (especially the poorer countries) the UR is likely to have an overall negative effect that will further drain their economic resources. For all South countries, the Round will also foreclose a wide range of development options.

In a sense, the UR complements what SAPs are achieving. The Round will lead to a very significant external liberalisation of many sectors and facets of the domestic economy of all the developing country members of GATT and its successor, the World Trade Organisation (WTO). SAPs affect about 80 indebted developing countries facing repayment problems. Should some of these countries get out of debt crisis and no longer require SAP loans, or should there be a change of government or government policies, the SAP policies can be changed or reversed.

However, once a country's government signs the UR agreement and enters the WTO, that country is obliged to follow the WTO rules. These

rules will severely restrict or constrain the possible policy options in many areas. Non-compliance of the rules can bring about heavy penalties and punishment, including retaliation through measures affecting trade and other activities. At the extreme, non-compliance can also lead to explusion, and thus the threat of discrimination or trade boycott from other countries.

It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for a Third World government to change the GATT/WTO rules, or to escape from compliance of obligations. The disciplines of GATT/WTO are legally binding on present and future governments. Once the WTO agreements come into force, it would thus be difficult for a present government to change its basic structural economic policies relating to foreign trade, investment, sectoral policies in services and agriculture, or technology policy (vis-a-vis intellectual property rights) and for a present opposition party with a different economic platform to implement such a programme (should it come to power) if this were to contradict the WTO rules.

An alternative would of course be to opt out of the multilateral system, but few present governments or political leaders have the strength or courage to think along these lines.

The Round is expected to bring some benefits to those developing countries able to take advantage of certain changes. A lowering of Northern countries' industrial tariffs may benefit those Southern countries with a manufacturing export capacity. The planned phasing out of the multifibre arrangement will have positive effects on textile-exporting Southern countries. And the reduction of agricultural subsidies would improve the market access of those Southern countries that export agricultural products. These benefits will mainly accrue to the better-off developing countries that already have an export capacity. The weaker countries (and especially the least developed countries) would not be able to benefit, or to benefit much, from these. The benefits will also take a long time (10 to 20 years) to come on stream, and the rate of benefits falls significantly short of what had been requested by the developing countries.

In exchange for these, the South as a whole has had to make major concessions, especially in agreeing to bring in the new issues of services, investment measures and intellectual property rights, into the GATT/WTO system.

For particular groups of Southern countries, the UR will also result in specific problems. For instance, the agriculture agreement could have severe negative effects on many Third World countries. Most of them (excepting the least developed countries) will also have to reduce domestic subsidies to farmers and reduce tariffs on imported food. Many farmers will have to compete with cheaper imports and may not survive. Agricultural liberalisation will also raise world food prices, which may benefit food exporters but about 100 Third World food importers will face a higher food import bill and are likely to be among the biggest UR losers.

The UR also for the first time brought services into GATT, and liberalisation of services will be an important part of the WTO's agenda. In many Third World countries, the services sector is relatively shielded and local enterprises in banking, insurance, trade, the media and professional services have been able to develop. It is feared that with liberalisation, the Northern TNCs involved in services will make further inroads and eventually dominate the sector.

The South's collective loss was most acutely felt in the agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) through which countries are obliged to introduce Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) legislation similar to Northern standards. This will hinder Southern countries' indigenous technological development and give rise to increasing technical payments such as royalties and license fees to TNCs owning most of the world's patents. We should note that the present industrial countries did not have patent or IPR laws, or laws as strict as will now be imposed through TRIPs, during their industrialising period, and this enabled them to incorporate technology designs originating from abroad in their local systems.

Most Third World countries have exempted agriculture, medicines and other essential products and processes from their national patent laws, but with the passage of TRIPs, everything is subject to IPRs unless explicitly exempted. The prices of medicines are expected to shoot up in many countries, and foreign drug sales will increase rapidly at the expense of local products.

In the area of Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs), the most important point is that national policies relating to foreign investments have also now begun to come under the ambit of the GATT/WTO

system. Originally, the Northern countries proposed that foreign companies be given an automatic "right to establishment" or "commercial presence". This would have given rights to foreign companies that were attained by the colonisers through war and bloodshed in the colonial era. Eventually, the objections of some developing countries prevailed.

However, the principle of "national treatment" (to treat foreigners no less favourably than locals) will progressively be applied to foreign firms that are established in developing countries. "Investment measures" such as local content (obliging foreign firms to use at least a specified minimal amount of local inputs) or policies that discriminate positively in favour of local enterprises, will be phased out. This, of course, has serious enough implications in terms of a probable increase in foreign control of the national economy.

And once the TRIMs is firmly set up within the WTO framework, the Northern countries will no doubt attempt to further increase the rights of TNCs, for instance, by insisting again on the "right to establishment". And what was not attained in the UR may be sought to be attained through regional agreements, for example the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its future extension in South America.

The implications of GATT/WTO for human rights have been studied by Gurdial Singh Nijar in a recent paper . He argues that the GATT treaty impairs a crucial facet of human rights, i.e. the sovereign right of a Third World state and its people to decide upon and pursue policies consistent with its stage of development. The Right to Development, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1986, embraces the right of peoples to freely " develop their political status and to pursue their economic, social and cultural development" and their right to "full and complete sovereignty over all their wealth and natural resources". Moreover, all efforts at the international level to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms should be "accompanied by efforts to establish a new international economic order".

Nijar's paper also argues that the agriculture treaty threatens national food security (and thus impairs the right to food) and that the TRIPs agreement, by opening the door to patenting of life-forms (including genetic materials of crops developed by Third World farmers and of medicinal plants used by indigenous peoples), violates the economic and cultural rights of Third World communities.

If the UR has gloomy implications, the post-UR scenario will be even gloomier unless Third World peoples and policy-makers make an effort to fight back in future WTO negotiations. Northern government plans to link trade (including trade measures and sanctions) to the environment and to labour standards in a manner that is likely to be inequitable and thus harmful to the South are already well advanced. There will also likely be attempts to link even more issues to trade measures, possibly including "trade-related women's rights", "trade-related judicial systems", etc.

The linking of issues to the possibility of sanctions under the clever device of attaching a "trade related" prefix to the chosen topics has been successfully used in injecting services, IPRs and investments into GATT/WTO. This device is very likely to be used in future efforts either to further liberalise Third World economies or to reduce their competitiveness in the scramble for world market shares. The aim also is to use the GATT instrument to shift a great portion of the burden of future global economic adjustment (for instance, because of environmental imperatives) to the South, which presently has a weak voice in the GATT/WTO negotiating forum. Indeed, it is precisely because the South is so weak in the GATT/WTO arena, coupled with the fact that GATT/WTO carries the power of "bite" in the form of trade retailiation mechanisms, that this institution has been chosen as a vehicle to institute reforms favourable to the North.

It is imperative that peoples' organisations and political leaders in the South realise the dangers and seriously organise themselves to match the negotiating capacities of the North. Otherwise, as in the Uruguay Round, our participation in the decisions of the WTO may be limited. During the Uruguay Round, one Third World Ambassador likened the South to the chicken that was given this choice by the chef: "With which sauce would you like to be eaten?"

Social and economic rights at national level

The international economic situation is a major source of most development problems faced by people in many countries of the South, and international factors have become and will become increasingly more important due to the processes of globalisation and transnationalisation. In so far as the social and economic rights of people in the South are adversely affected by these international factors, and specifically by

Northern or Northern-controlled institutions, there must be a clearer articulation of the role these institutions play in the violation of the human rights of Southern peoples, and more effective joint actions to fight against these violations.

However, in the realm of social and economic rights, it is also crucial to examine and to fight against the domestic sources of rights violations. The right to development incorporates the right of all individuals to have their basic needs fulfilled, to participate in decisions which determine the development process and to enjoy a fair and equitable share of the fruits of development.

A Working Group of the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1982 stressed that: "The realisation of the right to development requires, at the national level, the full exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, as well as the granting of equality of opportunity for all in the access to basic resources and services. This requires, in particular, the participation of all in the process of taking decisions that concern them and in the implementation of these decisions. It is important to encourage local development initiatives and to permit equitable distribution of the resources and advantages resulting from development."

It is true that international factors such as commodity price declines, and structural adjustment-induced cuts in social spending and increased unemployment, have given rise to a situation where national governments, even if they wanted to, are limited in their ability to realise the right of development for their people.

However, it is equally if not even more true that many Third World governments and elites (including political, business and professional elites) have themselves contributed to and compounded the problems arising from international factors. The distribution of wealth and incomes in most Third World countries are extremely unequal. Some governments have seriously tried to redress this by measures such as land reform, credit for the poor, provision of basic facilities, welfare aid and social services. These efforts have of course been hampered by recession and structural adjustment. However, many countries with a poor development record have been characterised by political dictatorship, the channelling of state funds to the private accounts of political leaders, gross financial mismanagement, and the introduction of ill-fated luxury projects that add fuel to the debt problem. In many countries,

the political leaders and local business elites have been under the influence of the TNCs, foreign aid agencies and foreign governments (especially during the cold war period), and have helped them in facilitating the dependence of the country, and the resulting heavy outflow of resources.

Instead of development lifting up the poor, many development projects mainly benefit the business community and the better-off sections of society. The poor and ordinary people are asked and usually forced to make way for these projects. Farmers are evicted from the land, small fisherfolk's seas are invaded by trawlers and polluted by industries, forest peoples suffer from the logging of their forests and pollution of their water supplies, and workers in plantations, mines and some factories are paid miserable, exploitative wages and work under intolerable conditions. Consumers are asked to pay higher prices for their products because monopolies (often owned by powerful political figures, or businessmen who contribute to the private or party funds of influential politicians) are able to charge high rates.

It is clear that in such circumstances there is a gross violation of the social and economic rights of poor or ordinary sections of the population, caused by inequitable national structures and by development strategies that benefit an elite minority and neglect the majority. These ordinary people are unable either to participate in the development process or to share equitably in the fruits of development. Thus, two of the basic tenets of the right to development have been violated, arising from national level factors.

It is also clear that in such circumstances and in such countries, the right to development will not be bestowed by the elite on the rest of society, but the victims of this inequitable development process have to organise themselves and fight for the realisation of their rights. Often, avenues are closed, as state laws are used by the elite to suppress legitimate dissent or expression of views. The suppression of civil and political rights (such as the right to free speech and association), through internal security laws (including detention without trail, sometimes for prolonged periods), and state terrorism (including torture, mass shootings, "disappearances") are used to support the suppression of social and economic rights, in order to maintain an economic model that benefits the elite.

In countries suffering from political and military dictatorship, it is understandable that ordinary people focus on their democratic and civil rights, for these rights form a large part of the basis for their capacity to organise to defend their social and economic rights.

On the other hand, it is also true that internationally-imposed economic policies (for example, via structural adjustment) have forced many governments, some against their natural will, to impose stringent economic measures that give rise to political unrest and explosions. Despite these popular protests, the government may not have the choice (even if so desired) or the ability to change its policies, as these are imposed externally as a condition for avoiding what may be an even worse situation (for example, a debt default, leading to the threat of trade boycott). Ultimately the state may take measures that increase the suppression of civil and political rights.

Thus, social-economic and civil-political rights are inextricably linked. The provision of civil rights alone, without appropriate socioeconomic policies would lead to a violation of the right to development and of the right to food, employment and health. The ordinary citizen may then demand bread (or rice) with his democracy. On the other hand, a respect for the right to development (and for social and economic rights) would also imply the adherence to the right of disadvantaged groups to participate, and to organise on behalf of their interests, and this of course requires an adherence to the conditions for civil and political rights.

Some implications

The large financial and economic outflows have greatly depleted much needed resources which could have been used by the countries of the South for domestic investment and development of basic facilities. Most of these outflows result from the preservation (even strengthening) of international economic structures that have consolidated the domination of transnational companies and banks.

The efforts of the South to redress these structural imbalances have met with resistance from the Northern governments that are intent on preserving the control of their companies. Thus the efforts to establish a "new international economic order" were beaten back.

As long as these structural imbalances remain, or even worsen, there will exist a very major impediment to the capacity of the Southern

countries to develop. Thus will also prevail a most unjust situation, where much needed resources are transferred from the poorer countries to the richer ones.

In the environment sphere, NGOs and policy makers are correctly paying attention to the "transboundary" or cross-boundary environmental effects of activities, such as when the air pollutants originating from one country affect neighbouring countries. It is of course unfair when a country has to suffer environmental problems caused by another, and this injustice is now recognised, and conferences, laws and measures are being formulated to deal with these issues.

In the economic sphere, there are even more cases of transboundary economic and development effects, of activities or decisions taken in one country affecting the economic and social welfare of other countries. For instance, changes in exchange rates engineered in one country or by a grouping such as the G7, may seriously result in losses in poor countries. Yet at present the Northern countries that hold the advantage have refused to consider reforms to the basic structures of the inequitable world economic order, and in fact have taken major initiatives to further dominate that order.

Transboundary human rights violations are also evident through the practice of double standards by transnational companies, not only in the economic sphere (through transfer pricing etc) but also in the dumping of toxic wastes in the South, and in the sale and unethical sale promotion of sub-standard, dangerous or inappropriate consumer products (such as tobacco, medicines already banned or severely restricted in the North, and baby milk), producer inputs (such as toxic pesticides and other chemicals) and technologies and industries (as had caused the Bhopal tragedy).

In so far as the South's social and economic rights are affected by decisions emanating from the North (and from their TNCs), then the violation by powerful countries of the human rights of other countries should be a major area of focus. Yet the tables, indices and comparisons of human rights records invariably portray the rich countries as superior upholders of human rights, while developing countries pale as violators.

There is no denying that in many countries in the South the human rights situation is atrocious, in terms of both civil and political rights as well as in social and economic rights. However, it is also true that the

wealth in the Northern countries is to a large extent built on the depletion and transfer of Southern resources (economic as well as physical). This wealth is also a major source of the relative political stability in the North, which facilitates the capacity of the system to allow a greater degree of dissent and civil freedoms, as long as they do not threaten the basic system built on privilege, inequities and wealth.

In so far as wealth facilitates the enjoyment of greater economic and civil rights, and as this wealth is significantly generated (through the mediation of TNCs and the supporting international economic structures from the colonial to the present periods) by exploiting the South's resources, then it could be said, that to some extent, the better enjoyment of human rights in the North is premised on the exploitation of the human rights of the South. More focus should also be placed on the transboundary human rights effects of decisions taken in powerful countries but affecting the lives and livelihoods of people in other countries.

It is thus imperative that peoples and governments of the South increase the fight for a fairer world economic order, and for the realisation at the international level for social and economic rights of Third World people.

However, it is equally important that the need for international reform is not used as an excuse to curb the legitimate rights of citizens in the South in their efforts to improve their own well-being, and to defend their livelihood and economic interests from the forces of modernisation, commerce or greed. The need for national-level reforms to give the disadvantaged groups a socially just share of national wealth and resources must be recognised side by side with the need for reforming iniquitable international economic structures, institutions and processes. Indeed, when the house is in order domestically, there is a better basis and capacity to fight for reforms internationally.

The Function of Liberal Democracy in the US Imperial Enterprise in the Philippines and Asia

Walden Bello

The promotion of democracy is said to be the cornerstone of the Clinton administration's policy towards the Third World or South. In many quarters, this stance has been greeted with much skepticism, if not derided as yet another example of American hypocrisy or Western cultural chauvinism. For the most part, however, the various critiques of the role of what we might call "missionary democracy" in US foreign policy have missed the essential point: that exporting a particular brand of democracy, the Lockean kind, has been an organic component of the American colonial and imperial enterprise.

The Philippine paradigm

Since the late 19th century, the US imperial enterprise in the Asia Pacific has been driven by the dynamic interaction among three dimensions or "drives": strategic extension or projection of the power of the US state, corporate expansion, and what we might call "democratic idealism." These drives cannot be reduced to one another, and their dynamics have often displayed a degree of autonomy from one another, to borrow a term from Marxian structuralism. A very good example of the complex but symbiotic relationship among these three dimensions has been the US relationship with the Philippines. And the US-Philippine relationship, in turn, is a microcosm of America's troubled relationship with the broader Asia-Pacific region.

The US relationship with the Philippines illustrates the troubling but symbiotic relationship among strategic extension, corporate expansion, and democratic promotion in US foreign policy toward the Asia-Pacific region in particular and to the Third World in general. Colonising the

Philippines in 1898 was a move that was dictated by the US elite's strategic and economic interests. But it was a move that was in stark contradiction to the origins of the US in an anti-colonial revolution against British rule—something that was underlined by the emergence of domestic opposition to the conquest in the form of the Anti-imperialist League, the most famous member of which was Mark Twain.

But the lesson that the US elite drew from the conflict between ideology and interests was not to retreat from imperialism but to give it a moral dimension that would not only neutralise popular opposition but also enlist the population behind the imperial project. The solution to the dilemma was classically American, something which would have been unthinkable in the case of the British and the French, who had no anti-colonial ideology to obstruct their colonial expansion.

Colonialism was justified by the *fin de siecle* US establishment as necessary in order to "prepare the Filipinos for responsible independence, the basics of democracy."

But democracy was not merely used to legitimise colonialism at home. It became an essential part of the paraphernalia of rule in the new colony. Limited Lockean liberal democracy—that is, democracy limited to formal equality in political rights, the most important of which was the right of every citizen to one vote in electing representatives—was a central mechanism in the U.S. effort to forge a national elite from the various landed regional groups that dominated the archipelago. A wholesale transplant of formal political institutions began shortly after the conquest, and by the time of independence in 1946, the Philippine political system was a mirror image of the American, with its presidential leadership, separation of powers, and two-party system. Yet in terms of real power, the Philippine democratic system was really a marriage between the feudal paternalism of the Philippine elite and Chicago-style machine politics. Elections were enthusiastically embraced by the elite, but it was hardly a belief in representative government that made the elite eager students. The main incentive was that democratic elections provided a means for a fractious elite to compete, relatively peacefully, for political office and alternate in power.

As for the poor majority of Filipinos, elections afforded the illusion of democratic choice—that is, the ability to choose among different elite candidates and elite political parties. In reality, the peasantry and the

urban masses were mobilised via kinship and patronage to support different elite factions in a society where organisation along class lines was still embryonic. Democracy did not extend to the economic sphere, and this play of electoral politics unfolded above an immobile class structure, whose distribution of income was one of the worst in Asia.

Universalising the Philippine model

With the onset of the Cold War and the United States' emergence as imperial superpower, the strategy of formal independence and formal democracy provided a paradigm for Washington's approach to other countries in the region. For the contradiction that the US experienced 50 years earlier upon its annexation of the Philippines—the conflict between America's disdain for formal colonialism and its drive for strategic and economic control—was now reproduced on a global scale. "The US," Neil Sheehan points out, "did not seek colonies as such."

> Having overt colonies was not acceptable to the American political conscience. Americans were convinced that their imperial system did not victimise foreign peoples . . . It was thought to be neither exploitative, like the nineteenth century-style colonialism of the European empires, nor destructive of personal freedom and other worthy human values, like the totalitarianism of the Soviet Union and China and their Communist allies. Instead of formal colonies, the United States sought local governments amenable to American wishes and, where possible, subject to indirect control from behind the scenes. Washington wanted native regimes that would act as surrogates for American power. The goal was to achieve the sway over allies and dependencies which every imperial nation needs to work its will in world affairs without the structure of old-fashioned colonialism.[1]

And, as in the case of the Philippines, formal democracy controlled by US-allied elites provided both the mechanism of influence and the justification for intervention in the affairs of a Third World country. As Frances Fitzgerald pointed out in her classic book *Fire in the Lake*,

> The idea that the mission of the United States was to build democracy around had become a convention of American politics in the 1950s.

> Among certain circles it was more or less assumed that democracy, that is, electoral democracy combined with private ownership and civil liberties, was what the United States had to offer the Third World. Democracy provided not only the basis for American opposition to Communism but the practical method to make sure the opposition worked. [2]

In Korea and Vietnam, many US officials tried to set up systems of representative democracy that they thought would serve as the best antidote to communism. That they were working through reactionary elites that did not believe even in the limited Lockean brand Washington favoured was conveniently overlooked. The CIA officer Edward Lansdale, for instance, saw in the feudal patriarch Ngo Dinh Diem a reformist democrat in the mould of Ramon Magsaysay, with whose collaboration he had crushed the communist insurgency in the Philippines in the 1950's.[3] But neither Vietnam nor Korea was the Philippines, where the elite had been socialised into electoral competition by the American colonial authorities over a 50-year period. The Korean and Vietnamese ruling groups had collaborated with despotic colonial powers—Japan in the case of Korea, France in the case of Vietnam. In these two intensely nationalistic countries, the Americans were perceived as stepping into the shoes of the old colonialists, and their "democratic" clients—Rhee Syng-Man in Korea, Ngo Dinh Diem in Vietnam—were mocked as reactionaries masquerading as democrats.

The crisis of elite democracy

The failure to implant formal elite democratic regimes that would stabilise Asian societies caught up in nationalist revolution left many US officials disenchanted with the ideology of missionary democracy. Thus, anti-communism soon overshadowed democratic credentials as the key criterion for choosing allies. In Vietnam, the US itself encouraged a military coup against the man they had once led themselves to believe was a democrat, Ngo Dinh Diem. In Korea, the US welcomed the military regime of General Park Chung-Hee, which seized power in 1962, as a stabilising development. And in Indonesia, the CIA chose to interpret President Sukarno's radical nationalism as pro-communism and proceeded to wage an eight-year campaign to dislodge him—a

process which culminated in the 1965 coup against him led by General Suharto.

The new Korean regime and the military governing elite that took power in Brazil in 1964 provided the prototype of the new mechanisms of neo-colonial control that US officials were looking for in the face of increasing evidence of the failure of formal democracy: a military-technocrat leadership that depoliticised the lower classes through repression but at the same time sought to build legitimacy by imposing a program of economic development. "Authoritarian leadership for development" became the theme of a work that eventually became the handbook for a new generation of officials at the State Department, the Agency for International Development, and the US-dominated World Bank: Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies*. In the "chaotic" Third World, the Harvard professor argued, it was quixotic to expect democratic government where there were no democratic traditions. There, the building of strong central authority must necessarily precede the question of democratic representation. [4]

Then, in the early 1970's, US officials' faith in democratic government received an even greater setback when popular democratic efforts to achieve genuine or substantive change appeared to move beyond the Lockean parameters of elite democracy in two countries that American officials had long glorified as "showcases of democracy" in their respective regions: Chile and the Philippines.

In 1970, the system of formal democracy allowed the ascent to power of the government of Salvador Allende, who declared his intention to nationalise the huge US copper corporations in his country and lead the country toward socialism. As mass movements for democratic change accelerated in the Philippines in 1970-72, the Nixon-Kissinger administration's attitude toward Philippine democracy was undoubtedly affected by what they perceived as formal democracy's failure to prevent the left from coming to power in Chile. The Chilean case was particularly alarming because the Popular Unity government promised to accomplish the transition to socialism through constitutional and democratic means. Washington's state of mind was captured by Henry Kissinger's classic comment on US policy toward the Allende government: "I don't see why we should let a country go Marxist because its people are irresponsible." [5]

Thus, when Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and abolished the 26-year-old system of formal democracy in the Philippines, Washington was not about to complain about the demise of the form of government that it had implanted several decades ago. As the staff of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee discovered:

> We found few if any Americans who took the position that the demise of individual rights and democratic institutions would adversely affect US institutions. In the second place, whatever US interests were—or are—they apparently are not thought to be related to the preservation of democratic process . . . US officials appear prepared to accept that the strengthening of presidential authority . . . will enable President Marcos to introduce needed stability; that these objectives are in our interest; and that . . . military bases and a familiar government are more important than the preservation of democratic institutions, which were imperfect at best.[6]

This was classic *realpolitik*, a political accommodation to what Kissinger saw as a truth: that American interests were sometimes best served by repressive Third World allies. But what this perspective missed was the centrality of missionary democracy to the American imperial enterprise. Extending democracy provided the key to successfully creating the political legitimacy necessary to marshal the public consensus necessary to pursue intervention abroad. The deflationary consequences, in terms of popular support for the imperial mission, when missionary democracy was replaced with national security and national interest as a rationale for intervention, were particularly evident in the case of Vietnam, as Martin Van Creveld points out:

> The original goals for which the US went to war included stopping Communism and preserving democracy . . . both of which comprised a fair share of idealism even if the idealism was never pure. As the war escalated, the demand that it should be fought not for some kind of starry-eyed idealistic goal but for "hardheaded" interests became more strident. "Interests" were used to justify an ever-increasing expenditure of treasure and blood, but the greater the expenditure the greater also

> the difficulty of pointing out what interests could justify it. Finally, when Henry Kissinger entered office as head of the National Security Council, he published an article saying that the United States was in Vietnam because it was there; this being tantamount to an admission that it had gone to war for no reason at all. [7]

By the time "peace with honour" became the principal rationale for maintaining the American military commitment in Vietnam, significant support for the enterprise among the American population had been seriously eroded. Instead, the Vietnam debacle and the US increasing identification with a growing number of authoritarian dictatorships provoked a strong popular movement that combined political and military disengagement with strong moral advocacy for human and democratic rights. Responding to the pressure from the "human rights movement," a section of the US elite identified with the Democratic Party and led by Jimmy Carter ran partly on a platform of disengagement from repressive regimes during the presidential elections of 1976.

But upon becoming president, Jimmy Carter was quickly and successfully pressured by the national security establishment to subordinate his human rights policy to "strategic concerns." Soon Carter himself was invoking stability and strategic interests to make the Shah of Iran, Park Chung Hee, and Marcos exceptions to his human rights policy. This embarrassing contradiction between human rights rhetoric and actual policy was eliminated when Ronald Reagan ascended to the presidency in 1981. Reagan's policy toward the Third World came to be known as the "Kirkpatrick Doctrine," after its prime ideologue, Ambassador to the UN, Jeane Kirkpatrick. The doctrine might be described as a radicalisation of Kissinger and Huntington by making US support for authoritarian solutions a moral imperative:

> The fabric of authority unravels quickly when the power and status of the man at the top are undermined or eliminated. The longer the autocrat has held power, and the more pervasive his personal influence, the more dependent a nation's institutions will be on him. Without him, the organised life of the society will collapse, like an arch from which the keystone has been removed. [8]

Kirkpatrick located US foreign policy toward the Third World squarely in the tradition of Thomas Hobbes instead of John Locke, which was, if anything, a foolhardy ideological enterprise. The problem this effort confronted was the same as that which dogged Kissinger's and Huntington's foreign policy revisionism: Americans had to feel good about imperialism, and the only way to do that was to make the promotion of Lockean democracy—a mainspring of the American political tradition—an element, if not the ideological centerpiece, of the imperial enterprise.

Democratisation and stabilisation

It was during the Reagan-Bush administration that the great movement away from authoritarianism occurred in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. In Asia, the milestones in this process were the overthrow of the Marcos regime by a civilian-military uprising in 1986, the fall from power of the Chun Doo-Hwan regime in Korea in 1987, the end of martial law in Taiwan also in 1987, and the ousting by a civilian uprising of the Suchinda military dictatorship in Thailand in 1992.

Contrary to the conservative rewriting of history that is going on, these events took place in spite of, rather than because of, the Reagan administration. For the most part, from Chile to the Philippines, US policy was to staunchly support dictatorships until their downfall appeared inevitable or their continued stay in power clearly undermined US economic and strategic interests. At that point, US strategists—usually pragmatists at the State Department—moved to place the US on the side of the anti-dictatorship forces, with the aim of influencing this movement and channelling its energies in a non-radical direction. Lockean democratisation, in short, became a key instrument of stabilisation.

This process was most evident in the Philippines in the early 1980's, when the combination of economic crisis and political repression threatened a situation which could run out of control, to the detriment of US interests. Washington's *bete noire* was the revolutionary National Democratic Front, which had gained an extremely influential position in the anti-dictatorship movement. With the assassination of Marcos' main opponent, Benigno Aquino, Jr., in August 1983, the middle class and a significant section of the elite came out in open opposition to

Marcos. This provided State Department pragmatists who had been advocating more distance from Marcos an opening to unfold a "stabilization via democratization strategy," the main purpose of which was to isolate the left and salvage US interests. Undersecretary Michael Armacost distilled the essence of this strategy in this fashion: "Our objective was to capture . . . to encourage the democratic forces of the centre, then consolidate control by the middle and also win away the soft support of the NPA [New People's Army]." [9] Free elections evolved as the "cornerstone of an effective counter insurgency campaign by demonstrating the government's commitment to meeting the people's aspiration for a responsive leadership of their choice."[10] Alarmed at how skilfully the US was manipulating the democratic agenda to split the elite and middle classes from the radical anti-Marcos opposition, the National Democratic Front called for a boycott of the presidential elections of Feb. 7, 1986.

In pursuit of this strategy, the US not only pressured Marcos to hold elections, but also neutralised him when a civilian-military uprising broke out and practically physically carried him out of the country, to allow Corazon Aquino to take over power. With the coming of Cory Aquino to power, the processes of formal electoral democracy stabilised a volatile social situation, led to the isolation of the left, and the consolidation of conservative elite control of the political process. The success of this democratization-as-stabilization strategy was summed by a senior State Department official:

> The coming of power of the Aquino government constitutes a setback for the insurgency because:
> • The new government, the contrast to the previous government, enjoys widespread popular support;
> • The principal propaganda target of the communists, the Marcos regime, is gone.
> • The communist election boycott was repudiated by the majority of Filipinos . . . [11]

More than eight years after Corazon Aquino's ascension to power, the Philippines is indeed stable, with the elite securely in control of the liberal democratic system of governance, The elite is also in secure

control of an economic system which is marked by such unequal distribution of wealth and income that has been one of the central causes of the country's dismal economic performance since it has prevented the emergence of a viable internal market that could serve as the basis of sustained economic growth.

Having evolved as a system that allows competition for political power among themselves while derailing radical mass challenges onto electoral channels, where they are more easily subverted and defused, liberal democracy is the Philippine elite's preferred system of rule. Indeed, the Philippine case suggests that contrary to much of the literature on the Third World state, it may be the bureaucratic authoritarian state, not liberal democracy, that is the exceptional state in the Third World.

Conclusion

To sum up, the US imperial project has been driven by the uneasy coexistence of three drives: strategic extension, corporate expansion, and "missionary democracy." The importance of the mission of exporting democracy—that is, a particular kind of democracy that we have called Lockean liberal democracy—can never be understated. This ideological dimension of US foreign policy stems from the contradiction between the imperial project and the country's origin in an anti-colonial and later neo-colonial expansion that was necessary to bring a people that inherited an anti-colonial tradition behind the imperial project.

Gaining domestic legitimacy for imperialism, however, was not the only function of formal democracy. Democracy provided a mechanism of stabilisation whereby elites allied to the United States could rule in a way that allowed competition among themselves while keeping more radical forces that could prove threatening to US interests away from political power.

However, when the process of democratisation moved beyond calls for formal electoral mechanisms towards demands for more substantive democratisation, involving economic redistribution that could harm the interests of US corporations and local elites, then the US moved away from support for democracy towards support for authoritarian forms of rule. But the dilemma of the US foreign policy establishment is that support for authoritarian rule in order to protect US economic and

strategic interests has lacked the moral dimension needed to consistently motivate the US citizenry behind it. Also, authoritarianism has been an extremely unstable form of rule that has been unable to resist pressures for democratisation—a point underlined by the great wave of democratisation from the mid-1980s to early 1990s, which took place despite, not because of, US foreign policy.

US policy has then swung back to encouraging democratisation, but in a limited form and under conservative leadership. This strategy has been successful in isolating the left and limiting the democratic transformation to formal electoral democracy in a number of countries. While its most successful outcome was in the Philippines, the US policy of stabilisation via democratisation also played a role in democratic transitions in South Korea and Thailand, to cite examples from Asia.

There are two key lessons for peoples in the Third World.

First, democratisation can be hijacked to serve as an instrument of imperial stabilisation. Second, when the US and its Northern allies come in strong on the side of democratic forces, it is most likely with an eye to altering the balance within the democratic coalition by strengthening the conservative forces who seek to limit political change to the return of formal democracy and isolating the forces advocating program of genuine, substantive democracy. Progressives in Asia and the South would do well to study closely the tragedy of the Philippines, where US-supported Lockean democratisation has become the central obstacle to genuine democracy.

Endnotes

1. Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie,* New York:Random House, 1988, p.131.

2. Frances Fitzgerald, *Fire in the Lake,* New York:Random House,1973, p.116.

3. See Edward Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars,* New York:Harper and Row, 1972.

4. See Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies,* New Haven:Yale University Press, 1968.

5. Quoted in Thomas Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets,* New York:Pocket Books, 1979, p.250.

6. US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Staff, *Korea and the Philippines,* Washington, DC:US Government Printing Office, 1973.

7. Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War,* New York:Free Press, 1991, p.147.

8. Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," *Commentary,* July 1979, p.37.

9. Michael Armacost, Speech at Foreign Service Institute, Rosslyn, Virginia, April 23, 1986.

10. Paul Wolfowitz, Statement at hearings of US House of Representatives Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, Washington, D.C., Nov. 12, 1985.

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The Impact of Western Imperialism Upon the Rights of People in West Asia and North Africa

Adel M. Hussein

Let us first correct the title of this paper: what is called West Asia and North Africa to us means the Arab Islamic nation. It is not a mere geographical area; it is a cultural one, and this fact was dominant in our confrontation with Western imperialism. Since European expansion began, imperialists were aware of the fact that Islam represents a fighting ideology against any foreign aggressors. Islam gained widespread acceptance in Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe. The potential for mobilisation of a fighting religion would strengthen the anti-imperialist struggle at large. Moreover, the Ottoman State represented a very strong power, unifying many Muslim countries and supporting others. Thanks to this Ottoman State, an anti-imperialist belt stretched from North Africa to East Asia. This geopolitical belt prevented Western invasion of Black Africa, and blocked the short-cut road to South Asia for four centuries. This was a major incentive behind the European search for new navigation routes, ending in the great geographical discoveries.

After successive defeats culminated in the liquidation of the Ottoman State in the 1920s, our Arab-Islamic nation was divided into different parts; occupied all by European imperialist states. The consequences were the same as in other colonies: we were looted and impoverished; economic underdevelopment and de-industrialization were enforced, and distortion in economic structures prevailed in the form of compulsory specialization in one or two primary products for every new born Arab country. This last feature led, in our case, to unexpected results when the narrow specialization in some Arab countries was in oil.

The discovery of oil in our nation, with the increasing strategic role of that product, added a new edge in our fight against Western imperialism. Imperialist forces were especially keen to maintain their dominance in oil in a region which happened to espouse a fighting religion (jihad).

So, heavy military presence was a permanent feature. Traditional ideologies were kept in check to prevent the revival of Islam as either an authentic model for development, or as a reunifying factor for the Arab Islamic countries to build up a united state. From the early nineteenth century, they discovered that all their plans to divide our nation into several states, should be supplemented by wedging an alien body to separate Egypt and the Western part of our Arab countries from the Eastern parts. The entity Israel was used to that end, and the Jews were used for their plan. France tried the same experiment with Algeria through massive French immigration at the expense of the Arab-Muslim natives.

Our confrontation with imperialist expansion and our fight for the real human rights, did not stop. When the Ottoman State was decaying and waning, Egypt (under Mohammed Aly) tried, in the first half of the 19th century, to rejuvenate the Islamic state.

The experiment of radical development in Egypt preceded the Japanese, and could have built, in a few decades, a powerful agro-industrial military base. Mohammed Aly adopted an independent policy directed to replace the decaying Ottoman state, but the European powers united their efforts for the first time, to abort his project. Their armies defeated us, and they imposed the agreements (1880) that killed our ambition for independent comprehensive development. The decline in Egypt continued under different pressures, and culminated in British occupation.

After the full domination and direct occupation of most of our Arab nation, the national liberation struggle continued, with its zenith in the Nasserite period. Inside Egypt, the Nasserite period, in spite of deviations and sins, could Egyptianize the economy and lead an independent self-centred development. Rates of growth were among the highest, coupled with radical measures for income redistribution. In the Arab region at large, all Arab countries got their independence with direct assistance from Egypt. Algeria liberated its land with the blood of more than one million martyrs. In the Nasserite period, all Western military

bases were liquidated in the region, and pacts with the West were dropped. With all this achieved, imperialist plans to divide our nation were challenged, and so practical steps for Arab unity started. The campaign for oil was inaugurated by the nationalization of the Suez Canal (1956) which is an integral part of the oil network, as the main passage for Gulf oil. We should remember here that nationalization of the Suez canal was sufficient to declare an international war against Egypt, and the world reached the brink of a nuclear war. This symbolizes the strategic importance of the area and its oil. The aggression was defeated, and international balances at the time helped, but this great victory pushed the Arab liberation movement further, and accordingly another abortive war was launched in June 1967. In this war we were badly defeated and a serious setback occurred.

On the issue of oil, we may add that the resistance against Israeli-American aggression did not end here. While Arab armed forces were being rebuilt and reinforced for another round to liberate the territories occupied by Israel, successive campaigns in the oil front occurred and ended in partial nationalization of foreign companies, in addition to some reforms in prices. But, the decisive campaign was in 1973, just a few days after launching our Great Liberation War of October (Ramadan). The decisive oil campaign began with a decision taken by Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) independently, without any consultation with Western companies or governments, to raise the price to the level seen by producing countries as fair. The revenues of these countries jumped from $20 billion (1970) to $133 billion (1974).

The full significance of underpriced oil will be understood by the realisation that enforced low prices represented an economic assistance to European economies much more than the assistance provided by the Marshall Plan. After reconstruction, economic development in the North was appreciably accelerated at the expense of oil producers. The political impact of the oil campaign in 1973 occurred when Arab oil countries took another "terrible decision". They imposed an oil embargo against the states which supported Israeli aggression. Without any doubt, these two strategic decisions (economic and political), presented a moment never witnessed before. It was the first time that small countries took the initiative in major decisions affecting the entire network of international relations. Thanks to the merits of the product OPEC monopolizes,

a positive change in the world order was just round the corner. But, the United States at once launched the counter offensive.

Israel was used for that end. So were Arab territories, kept occupied by massive American military assistance. On the other hand, direct American military preparations to occupy the Gulf States were ready, if other measures failed in containing the oil "threat".

Political moves (via Israel and some Arab countries), plus successful plans of the International Energy Agency (IEA) achieved the needed containment. IEA, initiated and headed by the United States, efficiently managed oil supply and demand in world markets, and the West (led by the US) split OPEC and paralyzed, step-by-step, its potentialities.

Re-control of oil production and prices was one facet of our setback, the other was to recycle and control the financial surplus owned by producing countries after price corrections. The six Gulf States alone enjoyed the benefits of a surplus of $462 billion in Western banks by the end of the 1980's, and all the devilish plans were implemented to prevent investing these funds productively in the Arab region. It is no wonder that other Arab non-producing oil countries were burdened within the same period by debts of $208 billion. All that is now over. All Arab oil savings were either confiscated or spent for Western interests.

For two decades, after the upheaval, the situation in the region was never stable, but we have to add a few words about our concept concerning oil. According to our Islamic principles of international justice and human rights, we cannot think of using this gift of God in blackmailing. We are the real guarantors for the continued supply of oil to all peoples. We only ask that this should be done in the framework of a new fair world order. The West led by the United States is for the opposite. They, the defenders of human rights, use their present domination over our oil to subjugate other nations. They use oil domination for maintaining the present situation in which 25% of the total world population spends 80% of the world's income, and with 6% of the world's population, the United States, using nearly 40% of its wealth.

The last crunch came with the Gulf War (1991). It was an oil war from A to Z. We should mention here first that the Iraqi state had an ambitious vision about Arab unity, which included independent development, and a just solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict. Iraq acquired high organisational skills, and thanks to that, it used its oil revenues to

build up its infrastructure and basic industries, and to educate its people to master sophisticated technology. In addition, they developed a mighty army. Americans understood that Iraqi achievements would support the Arab nation in general, and would influence the Gulf oil in particular. Iraq with its own mighty potential combined with a special relationship with Kuwait (together representing 20% of proven world oil reserves), would bring OPEC back to its throne. So the United States was determined to go to war and refused any compromise. It was a real world war, and benefiting from the absence of an influential Soviet Union, troops from 30 countries, under American command, participated in the war against the heroic Iraqi army. This highly sophisticated and brutal war reflects again the special geopolitical weight of our region. Mohammed Aly was broken, by Western imperialist alliance, and after one hundred and fifty years, another Western alliance came to crush Saddam Hussein and his country.

The impact of the Gulf war was severe. The invaders moved very quickly to reap the political fruits of hitting the Iraqi power. As expected, the destruction of Iraq seriously affected the balance of power in the Gulf region in particular, and in the Arab-Islamic region at large, for the benefit of foreign domination. The old imperialist states (England and France), tried to regain their previous status and interests, but the United States got, by far, the lion's share, and in the post-war arrangements, it enhanced and redefined the Israeli role. The Gulf War ended with legitimizing the permanent military occupation of the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) led by Saudi Arabia. GCC represents 40% of the world's proven oil reserves, and controls 45% of the world's net oil exports. Under the name of securing oil supply, the strategic American-Israeli alliance is now explicit, and all Arab arrangements opposed to it had to be removed. Iraq, Iran, and Libya are now under direct military threat. Severe economic sanctions and pressure are directed against a number of oil producing countries in the area, including the genocidal embargo against Iraq. Under the embargo, our defenders of human rights are trying to starve to death 20 million people. Other oil countries in the Gulf have been squeezed and their fortunes have evaporated. Instead of their traditional surpluses, all are now heavily indebted. Algeria is another tragedy with direct French intervention to retain its previous imperialist position. With all that,

OPEC is nearly dead, and the real price of oil nowadays is lower than its level before 1973.

On another related matter, the Arab-Islamic region does not suffer from overpopulation by any means. In fact, we are underpopulated compared with our large potentialities in natural and financial resources. In spite of that, all Arab countries were compelled to adopt birth-control policies, and this gained momentum after the Gulf War. The last international conference on population (organised by the United Nations), was held in Cairo, particularly, to emphasize Arab and Islamic commitment to the Satanic plan. If birth control can be defended in some regions for economic reasons, this, as we mentioned, cannot be defended in our nation. The only obvious reason for propagating it is to hinder our development, and also for geopolitical calculations. The only country in our region which suffers from overpopulation is Israel, and at the same time it is the only country which is encouraged to increase its population as much as it can, and by all means, including massive immigration.

Israel is a Zionist project with its own independent agenda. It has an international Jewish network, with its base in West Asia, and with special connections in the US. It is an open secret that Israel has 200 nuclear warheads with adequate means of delivery that can reach all Islamic countries in the region from Morocco to Iran. The United States and its Western allies have never referred to this threat against mankind and human rights in our region. On the contrary, it is seen as a useful arrangement for the American-Israeli alliance.

After the Gulf War, the Israeli role in the regional American strategy is now in the open. In addition to its military efforts, economic ones are now superimposed and orchestrated with massive assistance from the United States. In the name of peace, they impose very aggressive agreements. In these agreements Israel maintains legal, or de-facto utilization of our occupied lands and water. Over and above that, an enforced division of labour is designed to achieve Israeli monopoly for developed technology, and accordingly, guarantee our permanent underdevelopment and enhance inter-Arab contradictions.. It is a deal with Western countries and the United States. In this deal, Israel will benefit economically from Western and American co-operation (States and corporations), in implementing this arrangement. The West, on the other

hand, will benefit from expanding the Israeli role, from the military to the economy, in achieving more stability for Western domination over our nation.

If the new outspoken Israeli role is especially important in oppressing the Gulf and securing Western interests in that region, so it must receive a respectable price for its strategic services. The present agreements guarantee that for Israel.

Complementary to economic regional arrangements, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and other international institutions, intensified their pressure after the Gulf War, to impose their pseudo-economic reforms, and Egypt is a prime example of that. The measures imposed retarded economic development, and increased poverty and unemployment. A very important aspect in restructuring our economy was to facilitate the regional arrangements we referred to. It is interesting to note that while we were asked, in the name of economic efficiency, to drop all policies and institutions which would defend our economic sovereignty, Israel was allowed to do the reverse, to facilitate its free penetration of our markets, supported and subsidized by all its governmental mechanisms.

We conclude by stating that Islamic revival in our region acquired new dimensions after the triumph of the Iranian Revolution. However, there have been many setbacks, and progress has been much slower that what we had anticipated. But after the Gulf War, hegemonic Western powers were quite aware that this new liberating force was vigorously emerging and threatening to undercut all that they had achieved. The Sudanese revolution is a prime example of that new emerging "threat", and the developments in Algeria, another, since its elections and the coup which followed. "Islamic Fundamentalism" has become the catchword in all Western centres for strategic studies, and in Israel. As a result, Islamic political movements in all our countries are now suffering severe repression. Exchange of experiences, and common plans are implemented everywhere, with all the needed assistance, and support from Western defenders of human rights.

In spite of all that I have said, the picture is far from bleak.

Our enemies, have made some gains but we too have made some advances. Resistance to the West is growing in every corner of our Arab-Islamic region. Thanks to that, the general situation now is very

different from what our enemies had perceived four years ago, after the Gulf War. They planned to crush Iraq and to turn it into a fragile partitioned state, but in spite of starvation, heroic resistance maintained the unity of Iraq. The same is true of Iran and Libya, against all expectations and plans. Islamic Iran, in particular, is building a new social model with a strong economic base, and it has proved to be a real bastion against Western domination and Zionist plans.

Sudan has also maintained its unity, surpassed all conspiracies, and could develop a self-reliant economy with a very high rate of growth, within the framework of a new social Islamic environment. Contrary to all expectations and plans, Yemen has deepened its unity. At peoples' level, Islamic organizations and parties are the leading vanguard, moving with a clear vision and boldness. This is true of Algeria and Palestine. But the trend is the same in all Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, and even Kuwait. All this was counter to American-Israeli expectations and plans.

The Impact of Western Hegemonic Policies Upon the Human Rights of People in Sub-Saharan Africa

Muddathir Abdel-Rahim

Sub-Saharan Africa has been subjected to Western dominance for some five centuries—with serious consequences for successive generations of the peoples concerned, both in Africa itself and in the American and West Indian diaspora.[1]

For the purposes of this paper it may be convenient to consider the subject in three parts: each of which will be concerned with a particular phase in the development of Western hegemonic policies and practices in the region.

First amongst these is the period extending from about the middle of the 15th century to the Berlin Conference of 1884/5.

The second part will cover the seven or eight crucial decades from the Berlin Conference to the post Second World War period until about 1960.

The third, and last, will be devoted to a consideration of the situation since the 1960s, when most African countries achieved independence.

A detailed study, needless to say, is out of the question here. The main features of the subject will hopefully be highlighted and their significance for the topic under consideration indicated.

I

With regard to the first phase, two major themes emerged which proved to be crucially important in the context of the evolving Western hegemony in Africa and beyond.

First amongst these was the emergence, during the 15th century, of Portugal and Spain as revitalized and dynamic sea-faring nations. Un-

der the leadership of such princes as Henry the Navigator on the one hand and Ferdinand and Isabella on the other, Portugal and Spain then pioneered a number of revolutionary processes which transformed not only the internal situation within the Iberian peninsula and the Western Mediterranean, but the whole world—including Africa.

The said processes resulted, among other things, in such momentous developments as the destruction of the last remaining Muslim kingdom in Spain (Granada) and the expulsion of the Jews in 1492; the discovery—in the same year—of the Americas and the West Indies; the historic arrival of Vasco Da Gama in Calicut on 27 May 1498—as well as the establishment of the first colonies in North Africa, on various parts of the West African coast and in Angola and Mozambique.

The example of the Portuguese and the Spaniards was in due course followed by other European powers—including the Dutch, the British, the French, the Danes, the Swedes and the Germans. A pattern of settler colonialism and other forms of Western domination was thus evolved which ultimately resulted in the complete subjugation of Sub-Saharan Africa and, indeed, of the whole continent.[2]

Before discussing these later developments however, mention should be made of the second major theme which stood out in the course of the first phase of Africa's encounter with the rising powers of the West. This was the growth and development, especially during the 17th and 18th centuries, of the famous Atlantic slave trade.

Slavery is, of course, an old and thoroughly objectionable institution which has nevertheless been known and practised in many societies around the world—including African societies—since time immemorial. It is generally agreed, by experts and others however, that the Atlantic slave trade was, by far, the most brutal and savage in human history.

Though it was finally abolished once it became clear (with the gradual spread of industry and the industrial revolution in the course of the 19th century) that slavery was no longer in the economic interest of its long time practitioners to maintain, the Atlantic slave trade has had serious and far reaching consequences. It is important to note that these have been vitally important and tragic not only for the victims directly concerned and for the African societies from which they had been torn away, but for the whole of modern humanity as well.

Apart from the unspeakable (and unquantifiable) indignities which were routinely inflicted upon the enslaved—both *en route* to their

various destinations and subsequently—the numbers involved (variously estimated at about 12 to 25 millions), as Professor Fage has pointed out, "undoubtedly (constituted) one of the greatest population movements in history, and certainly the largest emigration by sea before the great European emigration, also primarily to the Americas . . . ."[3]

In addition, as Dr. Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago has shown, the Atlantic slave trade has been a major contributory factor in the growth and development of two principal phenomena of continued world-wide significance and import: namely, capitalism and racism.[4] The Apartheid system which has continued to haunt Africa and the world well into the nineties of the twentieth century and has not yet been completely dismantled even today, is perhaps the ugliest embodiment of the worst forms of exploitation and oppression of capitalism as well as of the blind arrogance and hatred of racism. But it is by no means the only, or last, citadel inhabited by these enemies of humanity and common sense. Despite their loudly advertised advocacy of human rights, many countries and groups in both Europe and America continue to impose myriad forms of racism, exploitation and oppression on millions of people—at home and abroad.

II

This brings us to the second phase in the development of Western hegemony in Africa.

Fierce competition between European powers over the acquisition of African colonies had already been building up when they finally decided, in 1884, to hold the first conference for the partitioning of the continent (or, more accurately, those parts of it—many times larger than Europe —which had not already been colonized by any of the competing powers.) Formally convened by Bismarck, the Berlin Conference therefore marked a turning point in the development of relations between Africa and the West. Within a few years thereafter, the whole continent had been subdued and a new phase, marked by more intensive exploitation of Africa's human and material resources and even more racial arrogance than before, was thereby launched.

Not surprisingly, the process of conquest through which African resistance movements were broken, was decidedly barbaric and genocidal in nature—the so-called civilizing mission which allegedly prompted the conquest notwithstanding.

One example of this was the treatment of the Mahdists of the Sudan at the hands of Kitchener and his troops armed, as they were, with superior firearms and technology. Not content with massacring over 11,000 persons in the course of a few hours during the decisive battle of Karari on 2nd September 1898 (aspects of which were vividly portrayed by the young Winston Churchill in his classic "The River War"), Kitchener and his troops proceeded to commit further atrocities which were widely reported in the British and Egyptian press at the time. Among these was the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb and the disinternment and dismemberment of his body. Trying to minimize and justify these acts Kitchener wrote:

> I thought it was politically advisable . . . that the Mahdi's tomb be destroyed . . . I ordered its destruction . . . This was done . . . the Mahdi's bones being thrown into the Nile. The skull only was preserved and handed over to me for the disposal. No other bones were kept . . .[5]

Comparable acts of savagery and barbarism were committed by the French in Algeria, the Italians in Libya, the Belgians in the Congo, the Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique and by the Dutch and the British in South Africa and elsewhere.

The administrative systems which were established for the "pacification" and exploitation of the conquered territories varied with the variation in style between the colonizing powers. For example, Leopold II of Belgium regarded the Congo as his own personal property and insisted that all benefits reaped from the colony should therefore accrue to him. "The Congo," he declared, "has been and would have been but a personal undertaking ... My rights over the Congo are to be shared with no-one; they are the fruit of my own struggles and expenditure."[6] The resultant abuses caused widespread protest in Europe and America as well as in Belgium. In consequence a Colonial Charter was adopted in 1908 as a result of which the Congo graduated from the status of king's private property to that of a Belgian colony under the control of Parliament. From the point of view of the colonized however the ensuing triple alliance of state, church and private enterprise made little difference. The exploitation of the Congo's ivory, rubber and—at a later stage—minerals, continued unabated and so did forced labour and other forms of human degradation.

Similarly, the administrative philosophies of the French and the British differed in that while the former was based on assimilation and centralization, the latter was premised on indirect rule and decentralization. Regardless of differences in style and approach however the British and French colonial governments in Africa were alike in being exploitative and oppressive. Both were discriminatory, practised forced labour, and inflicted excessively harsh punishments on critics and protesters.

Education, particularly in Portuguese and Belgian colonies, was a low priority, distorted and dismissive of indigenous African values both Islamic and traditional. It was in many cases left to Christian missionary societies. These, for their part, had their own agenda but were usually willing to act as agents for colonial governments. Thus the Governor General of the Sudan, referring to the role of the missionaries in the implementation of government policy in Southern Sudan said, in his Annual Report for 1905, that the missionaries, while proselytizing the Southern Sudanese, were also busy "teaching these savages the elements of common sense, good behaviour and obedience to Government authority."[7]

Not surprisingly therefore, many Africans who had received baptism together with whatever education they managed to garner at the hands of missionaries, were subsequently bitter both about the educational policies of the colonial regimes and about the role therein of the missionaries. Thus, to quote one example, Mr Alex Quaison-Sackey, Ghana's Permanent Representative in the United Nations at the time of Dr Nkrumah, wrote: "..... such was the influence of the Christian missionaries of various denominations that all evidence of African culture was gradually suppressed or eradicated from memory. Even our names were purposely Anglicized ... (or) ... dropped completely (in favour of European ones)." "In these cases," he continued, "it seemed as if one's own individuality were gradually being obliterated or, at least, being overlaid with a quality that was distinctly not African".[8]

Another example of tragic alienation through miseducation is that of the Christianized Algerian Berber, Jean Amrouch, who was once prompted to say: "I no longer know who I am!" and to refer to himself in a public lecture as a "cultural monster". "Men of my sort," Amrouch poignantly said, "are monsters, historical errors".[9]

But the perpetrators of cultural colonialism—administrators, educationists and missionaries alike—remained insensitive to the tragic

consequences of their actions. For they were committed, above all, to raising African elites and individuals who—uprooted and alienated from their own cultures and peoples as they may well be—could be relied upon to act as willing tools in the hands of their colonial masters: certainly under colonial rule, but even after independence.

In concluding this section of our survey it should be pointed out that colonial governments may, with some justification, claim credit for abolishing certain practices inimical to human rights—such as slavery and human sacrifice which were prevalent in some African societies. On balance however, it is abundantly evident that colonialism in Africa was genocidal, racist, oppressive and exploitative of both human and material resources; it was thus clearly, and grossly, inimical to human rights. In the words of the Nigerian scholar, Professor Osita Eze, "Colonialism was essentially antithetical to human rights promotion and protection".[10]

III

In view of the above-mentioned nature and policies of colonial regimes in Africa, it was natural that Africans—like others around the world who had been victimized and humiliated by colonialism—engaged in protracted and often bitter armed struggles in order to regain freedom and rid themselves of the evils of colonialism and imperialism.[11]

The growth and development of African nationalism, coupled with the transformation of the international system in the post-Second World War era, facilitated the achievement of independence by an increasing number of African states especially from the mid-1950s onwards. With the collapse of the Apartheid regime in the 1990s, the situation had been radically changed.

It is important to note however that the formal withdrawal of colonialism and the acquisition by African peoples and states of sovereign statehood have by no means finally excluded the continued existence—by other means—of Western hegemony in Africa (and former colonies elsewhere).

The continued influence, if not control, of "neo-colonialism", has been made possible by a number of factors, the most important among which may be summarized as follows:

1. The political fragility and economic vulnerability of African states. Causes, as well as symptoms of these are, in turn, traceable to a number of interconnected issues: including unfavourable terms of trade and their consequences for exporters of primary products and the resultant crisis of debts and debt servicing; the fact that, whereas in the fifties and the sixties Africa was a net exporter of foodstuffs (especially cereals), it has since become increasingly dependent on imported foods to keep its growing population alive; and the further fact that—whereas in the past until the 1980s—various forms of economic assistance were forthcoming from a variety of competing countries and power blocs, the situation has since been transformed for the worse owing, *inter alia*, to the growing preoccupation of European countries with their own affairs especially with regard to European unity on the one hand and, also, in consequence of the diversion of much of the available forms of assistance and investment away from Africa to the countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The resultant state of weakness and vulnerability has rendered African states open to penetration, and even control, not only by former colonial powers and other Western states and governments, but also, and no less importantly, by a wide spectrum of powerful companies and ruthless multi-nationals.[12]

2. The fact that information and the mass media are dominated, and of course manipulated, worldwide and not only *vis-a-vis* Africa, by Western systems and interests.[13]

In consequence, the perceptions of many, including some decision makers, in Africa and elsewhere in the newly independent states of the world, are all too often influenced, if not actually moulded, by Western sources of information and disinformation.

3. The fact, already alluded to in the second part of this paper, that certain sections of the Westernized elites, many of whom occupy strategically important positions in the governmental and social structures of their respective countries, are (because of their upbringing and socio-cultural alienation) particularly open for manipulation as well as corruption, and are therefore rendered liable to become willing tools or agents of neo-colonialism and continued Western hegemony.

For all these reasons, therefore, the people of Sub-Saharan Africa, despite the attainment of political independence more than thirty years ago for most of them, continue to suffer myriad forms of degradation and deprivation of human rights—not only in consequence of their own failures and shortcomings, nor owing to the tyranny and despotism of many of their leaders and governments, but also, and no less importantly, as a result of continued Western domination and exploitation.

Endnotes

1. One of the most useful general surveys of African history is the eight volume *General History of Africa* published by UNESCO in the course of the eighties. A comparable work, also in eight volumes, is the *Cambridge History of Africa*, edited by J.D. Fage and R. Oliver, published between 1975 and 1986. Among the many single volume studies, I have found the following three most helpful: J.D. Fage: *A History of Africa*, second edition, London 1990; William Tordoff: *Government and Politics in Africa*, second edition, London 1992; and Naomi Chazan *et al*: *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*, second edition, Colorado and London, 1992.

2. *Ibid.*

3. J.D. Fage, *A History of Africa*, p. 255

4. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, North Carolina, 1944.

5. Quotation from a letter written by Cromer to Salisbury, 12 March 1899, PRO FO/78/5022 cited in Muddhathir Abd al-Rahim's *Imperialism and Nationalism in Sudan*, Claredon Press: Oxford, 1969, footnote 2, p. 96

6. Quoted in Osite C. Eze's, *Human Rights in Africa*, Lagos, 1984, p.18.

7. *Annual Report for 1905, Egypt*; No. 1 (1906), Cd 2 817, p. 125 also cited in the above mentioned *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan*, p. 73.

8. Alex Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound*, New York, 1963, p.52

9. Quoted in David C. Gordon, *The Passing of French Algeria*, London, 1966, p.167

10. Eze, *op.cit.*, p. 22

11. One of the best and most sensitive early works on the subject is Thomas Hodgkin's *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*, London, 1956.

12. Cf. N. Chazan et al, *op. cit.*

13. See for example, Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, New York, 1978.

The Impact of Western Hegemonic Policies Upon the Rights of People in Latin America

Alejandro Bendana

The record

In about 1580, Sultan Mural III, commissioned a study of what had taken place in the Americas. The result was a History of the West Indies, in which the following was written: "Within twenty years, the Spanish people conquered all the islands and captured forty thousand people, and killed thousands of them. Let us hope to God that some time these valuable lands will be conquered by Islam and will be inhabited by Moslems and become part of the Ottoman lands."

It is tempting to conceive that "conquest" at the hands of a culture other than West European would have occasioned less of a devastation. Indeed, it might have saved much energy around the debate whether "Latin" America is part of the West or not. But who bothers to consult the conquered? In any case, the reports received by the Sultan were grossly underestimated. Within thirty years of Columbus' voyage, tens of millions lay dead with their ancient agricultural civilization in ruins. Historians believe that this first appearance of the West in the "New World" was responsible for the greatest demographic disaster in human history: a 90 per cent decrease in population within a generation of the first invasion.

Until recently, non-indigenous demographers assumed that the Americas were populated by primitive peoples—perhaps some 10 million—incapable of supporting large and complex societies. Such a perception was almost necessary in order to minimize the extent of the population collapse and the amount of European guilt. The more savage the people, the more reasonable the carnage. Yet, we now calculate the pre-Columbian population at more than 100 million—30 million

alone in Mexico—in contrast to a European population of that time of some 50 million who did not enjoy the high degree of good health, infant survival and life span rates found in much of the Americas.[1]

There is a word for the demographic disaster: genocide. And the disease which occasioned it as less biological or infectious,than it was political and cultural. Such a catastrophe was the logical consequence of the presumption of European cultural superiority and the predatory nature of their socio-political regimes. As understood by native peoples, now and then, there is little dispute that imperialism's most devastating, lasting and continuing impact was biological and cultural, driven by economic forces and rationalized by ideological ones. Without denying the havoc of epidemic diseases, we also point to colonial warfare, enslavement and exportation, overwork in the mines, massacres, starvation and malnutrition, breakdown of subsistence food production, and even loss of will to live or reproduce, including infanticide, suicide and abortion as important factors that explain the population decline and made it all the more vulnerable to disease. The epidemics then are not neutral, natural disasters: they impact populations in the context of the social, cultural and material situation imposed by colonialism which allowed disease to fester and spread and predisposed natives to succumb to even slight infections. [2]

The same regimes which at home turned producers into wage labourers, reproduced its system of control, dispossessing people world-wide of independent means of production and subsistence, and rearranging entire populations, from settlers to slaves, entire societies and civilizations, as it best suited them in their pursuit of fortune. Chattel slavery, which had virtually disappeared, was reintroduced in Western Europe, part of the institutionalization of modern colonialism, accompanied by the ideology of racial and religious superiority and native inferiority. Following the destruction of societies organized to provide food security, geared by religion to the preservation of the ecosystem, the Western culture of power and imposition led conquering elites to organize societies around economic extraction upheld by the colonialist reproduction of European conceptions of nationalities, loyalties, symbols and frames of universal reference.[3]

From 1492 onward the "development" of the Americas responds to the capitalist logic of unbridled exploitation of natural and human resources entailing polarization as the result of a constant demand of

peripheries to adjust to the demands and constraints of the dominant centres of capital concentration, first European, then American, which managed to break the European monopoly in time to join in the apportionment.

The Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, and then the Americans joined in the scramble to extract minerals and produce—gold, silver, lead, zinc, tin, oil, nitrate, sugar, bananas, coffee and rubber. In order to facilitate extraction and sales, forests were razed, slaves brought in, rivers were poisoned or diverted, the elaborate coastal ecosystems of the Caribbean and Brazil were devastated. Sugar, coffee, rubber, and cotton booms came and went, leaving behind vulnerable economies, ghost towns, unworkable and tired lands, polluted waters, treeless terrains, unemployed and displaced populations. The logic of mining or plantation systems has not changed: new booms with corresponding environmental and socio-cultural bust, each one worse than the past. Indeed, of all the ecological devastation since 1500, some 70 per cent has taken place since 1990.

Over the centuries, power struggles on the continent and industrialization accentuated the race for colonies and resources, with once again the indigenous peoples suffering the most, and often forced to join in the fighting against one another. The colonization of the Americas permitted the drastic acceleration of mercantile capitalism allowing it to acquire and sustain its global hegemony, permitting it to attack the Orient and impede the prospect of its own independent development. Independence in Latin America was only nominal, as it quickly gave way to economic and political dependence on the United States, which in the best Western style took on the conquest of its frontier and of the continent, expelling European competitors and seizing their colonies for itself.

Nineteenth century industrialization accentuated the polarization of wealth and power with the dictum the "North industrializes and the rest of the world does not". And in our own time, the polarization is further aggravated by monopolistic developments in technology and the new modalities of finance capital which allow the peripheral industrialization and enrichment of minority parts and social sectors in the South at the further expense of the rest of the world. And in the era of high technology and massive agribusiness, the global economy threatens people with extinction.

Over the past 10 years, the increasingly predominant neo-liberal political economies in Latin America have been accompanied by massive social dislocation—and again we hear the 500-year old speech that these are necessary consequences of "modernization" indispensable for a better future based on integration with the global economy. The same Western- or Northern-led globalization—that is the international spread of capitalist exchange and production relationships—continues to be a socially, culturally and ecologically destructive process, generating greater inequalities both within and among countries.

Aboriginal peoples of the Americas were the first victims of capitalist exploitation. Later, Africa was devastated by the slave trade organized chiefly to replace the devastated native population of much of the Americas. Over the centuries, many modalities of the conquest would change, but the fundamental essence of the invasion retained its essence, while other manifestations are apparent to this very day in the form of persecution, discrimination, racism, genocide, exploitation, isolation and especially, impoverishment. While indigenous and black peoples formed important percentages of the total population, predominant national cultures failed to reflect indigenous culture, preferring instead to identify with European heritages. They formed part of the same European culture of violence unleashed against the "lawless savages" whose own humanity was recognized only with great difficulty.

Extermination, destruction, repression, exile and death, then and now, have not impeded the indigenous peoples from preserving and enriching their identities—perhaps indeed therein lies a principal explanation for sheer survival in the face of such overwhelming odds. Indians survived in the midst of advanced and dependent capitalist regimes in a constant struggle against colonialism and extermination. Although reduced to poverty and marginalized, the native peoples conserve and reproduce many cultural characteristics and forms of organization, strengthened through strong oral traditions adapted to cultures of struggle and resistance.[4]

But the culture of power sparked a counter culture of resistance powerful enough to establish links among communities and sectors that might otherwise have nothing in common except the need to survive, an awareness of a common victimization and a consciousness of the need to gather forces in order to project an alternative.

500 years of resistance

Against this devastating, historical backdrop, not even the Spanish Government referred to the "discovery of America" preferring instead to term the episode an "encounter" of "civilizations"—a less offensive euphemism that was taken up by Latin America's own White or White-minded intellectuals. Although most of the population in "Latin" America and the Caribbean, particularly its native and black segments, had little to celebrate, there was space for reflection on colonialism and its subsequent social injustices, national oppression, racial discrimination, and ecological devastation.

For oppressed peoples, the end of history took place not in 1992 but in 1492, as a new period opened in world history in which Western European elites and later American elites were able to tap the resources of the "new world" to build a commercial, industrial, military and ideological global empire. Ethnic cleansing and final solutions are indeed twentieth century phraseology for the accompanying means with which the West defined the stages of history, marking the beginning and the "end" of the victory of the powerful and the vanquishing of its victims.

The 500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Campaigns are therefore more than a mere contemporary response to the polemical commemoration of the first invasion. Going beyond counter-mobilization, the Campaign became a rich forum for reflection on politics, culture and alternatives, a virtual laboratory full of new ideas, proposals and strategies, emerging at a time when we were told there were no more alternatives.

Other sectors were attracted to the Campaign out of a growing appreciation of the indigenous search for strength and inspiration in its past, a new recognition of how the culture of resistance contributed to strengthening what are indeed universal values centred on the community as well as the defense of individual and collective rights. And it is on the basis of a shared history of oppression that indigenous peoples in the Americas and elsewhere have been drawn together to share, to organize, to warn and to struggle.

On account of its significance and universal potential, the indigenous movements of the Americas pose one of the sharpest challenges

to the onslaught which has proclaimed itself to be the end of history. To those that say there is no alternative to globalization, the movements respond by looking to culture, spirituality and history as sources of autonomy and alternatives, as a basis of a logic of life which is different from the logic of the market place.

Following 1992, the challenge faced by the Campaign is to attain political sustainability, to go beyond counter-celebrations, to galvanize the instinctive popular rejection of the commemoration which drew together hundreds of thousands in the Americas and transcended a rich Indo-Afro-Latin American consciousness, extending to Europe, where counter-celebrations and solidarity initiatives multiplied.

Much has been attained already. An important victory in this respect was the granting of the Nobel Peace Prize to Rigoberta Menchu in 1992, the convening of two summits on native and indigenous peoples, as well as the United Nations proclamation of 1993 as the International Year of Indigenous Peoples. Some years earlier, African governments blocked a resolution introduced by Spain, other Western countries and most Latin American governments, to celebrate the 500-year anniversary, denouncing the fact that the body established for the goals of peace and decolonization should celebrate the onset of modern colonialism. It was most revealing that the indignation felt by Indo-Americans about the Eurocentric debate should find its expression, not in the positions of their own mostly white governments, but in those of Africa.

Revealing, but not surprising, is the fact that the indigenous peoples of the Americas are unrepresented at the United Nations, although they have managed to attain a legal recognition for the category of indigenous peoples. The category is now validated by the United Nations as a concept of oppressed peoples that goes beyond the Americas.

But social recognition and political organization are equally important. With the counter-commemoration an important step was taken. The movement's leaders do not claim to have provoked a mass cultural revolution or to have even been successful in containing the furious neo-liberal encroachment upon popular thought and expression, but the seeds of doubt and of rebellion have been planted as new and old Western capitalist precepts meet sure criticism. Indeed the polemic, by unsettling historical interpretations, provoked a reflection among broad

sectors of society spanning the Church, teachers, and politicians, centred on the critical examination of the past, present and future of oppressed peoples.

In essence, the survival and political resurgence of native culture, with its emphasis on classless equality and spiritual-cultural commitment to respecting the environment, came to symbolize a fundamental driving force of a broader struggle for social and economic justice, of resistance to the culture and politics of the global market place. Despite the disillusionment with socialism, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the electoral defeat of the Sandinistas, and the continued dominance of the North, we cannot underestimate the political importance of the reawakening of indigenous, autochthonous and popular consciousness. If politics takes place in a cultural milieu, and if the neoliberal North and others have been adept at manipulating cultural symbols around reactionary agendas and commodification, then the native movement provides us in Latin America with powerful cultural tools (symbols, values, beliefs, assumptions and ideals) in order to infuse new hope into politics—indeed to give politics a new meaning.[5]

Thus what once appeared to be fragmentary, dispersed, escapist and even mystical expressions of faith and life, today acquire a new coherence and capacity to inspire common defense of life in the face of Northern globalism. As Noam Chomsky points out, had the quincentennial of the Old World Order fallen in 1962, it would have been celebrated once again as the liberation of the hemisphere. Not so in the 1990s.[6] Thus, from challenging a proposition of a particular historical event, the Campaign went on to assume a historical responsibility for articulating alternatives free from cultural massification, environmental destruction and human exploitation.

Nationalism, community and imagination

If the West announces the end of history, it is for the peoples of the South through their culture to conceive a new beginning of history—a new myth or imagination grounded in reality. We are not arguing here on behalf of negative private worlds divorced from reality, nor of external impositions of ethnicity on unsuspecting subjects. This would also serve as an antidote to those left in intellectual post-modernist circles who have given up on science and rationality as tools of liberation,

leaving the oppressors all too ready to continue to monopolize those tools for their own use.

The poor and the weak send out a message of a rationally-sustained hope and vision, at the same time the rich and powerful say there is no future and that the enemies of the liberal capitalism have all been slain. The "new" perspective, best embodied in the culture of resistance of native peoples, is also shared by growing sectors of the popular movement, including the environmentalists, in the North and South. A new paradigm of a different globalism would be in the making, a globalism from below, a community versus state-oriented objective with which many can identify, including the left revolutionary parties, which needs to navigate between the unprincipled abandonment of socialist aspirations and objectives on the one hand, and the dogmatic and rigid adherence to Eurocentric dogma on the other.

But in this spiritually-based community there will be no place for the destructive tendencies sometimes found in nativism or fundamentalist currents which allow culture and religion to become forces of self-delusion and denigration of other sectors, peoples, genders or religion, not to mention political manipulation.

Neither extreme ethno-linguistic or religious particularization nor an endless quest for prescriptive theoretical clarity will bring us closer to a reunification and reconciliation among the peoples of the South, and hence to the possibility of building new social subjects capable of struggling to attain their own social and political space on a global scale. For it should be solely on the basis of analyzed experiences and cultural settings, that we can proceed to arrive at effective political and educational strategies against an inherently unfair economic system. That is to say, to marshal nationalism and even the state as political forces channelling what might otherwise be regressive movements into more effective, and hopefully less violent, counter-systemic challenges. This means an inclusive versus an exclusive form of nationalism which has no need to proclaim and violently pursue racial, religious or ethnic purity.

Benedict Anderson explains in his study of the origins of nations in Europe that nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that precede it, out of which—as well as against which—it came into being.

Recent studies would suggest that nationalism is a product of changing human consciousness, not based in the intellectual domain of theory, but rather in the realm of imagination.[7]

Yet culture may also be seen as a form of imaginative historically-rooted non-fiction or "myth". And if indeed, as some claim, consciousness of having a nationality or belonging to a nation in now virtually universal and a recognized socio-cultural concept, then, indeed, the cultural component must be underscored if we were to bridge the gap between the political power and the philosophical poverty which has historically characterized nationalism.[8] In other words, a native movement (or an Islamic one) would not be content to leave the field of politics to the politicians. Indeed, much of their appeal stems from the fact that so many are excluded from the political process and may turn to the indigenous religions to express their grievances.

The lack of full scale support for the Chiapas indigenous uprising which shook Mexico this year demonstrates that the left still has a long road to travel. Conscious of this historical weakness, the Campaign seeks to transform itself into a popular, black and indigenous transnational social movement oriented towards the construction of a new future, of a different globalism, proclaiming that a new history is possible and that its protagonists will be all those who were previously excluded from history.

We reinterpret history of engagement with Western colonialism in order to better struggle with it, to open the way for new historical hypothesis and therefore new historical outcomes. In this way, we challenge the neo-liberal dictate that the time for questioning is over, and although we have no specific answers, we are convinced that history has not been predetermined against us. The blossoming of the indigenous, black and popular movements are a living testimony of a still fertile historical and political field—as each in its own way has reached out to seek ethical common ground in order to defend life. A critical observation of the world we live in, of history, is a common point of departure to get at the root of the crisis and find clues to solve it. It is not a moralistic proposal, because the ethical component is not divorced from the search for concrete responses in the political, economic, educational, ecological fields among others. And it is not prescriptive, because we identify and join with these historical subjects capable of pursuing a clear strategy.[9]

We reconstruct the past from the perspective of the indigenous culture of resistance in order to better articulate contemporary political and social frameworks in which to analyze and act upon a world in crisis. Although the culture of resistance is often inspired by tradition and ancestry, it is also a vision which becomes renovated and purified over the course of the centuries of oppression and resistance. Culture and spirituality—so often neglected by the modern Western left as components of struggle—become mutually reinforcing standpoints for the ethical examination of the global crisis (including the collapse of the Soviet bloc).

For it is precisely at the level of ethics and popular culture that many of us feel neo-liberalism can be best engaged, particularly when it comes to the struggle for hearts and minds. In this context, the indigenous spirit, the most salient and persistent expression of the culture of resistance to Western hegemony, as Girardi postulates, becomes a virtual laboratory in the search for alternatives at different levels of material existence. After all, it is the indigenous peoples of Latin America that suffer the highest rate of misery and the most discrimination, yet it is they among all peoples of the Americas that have best fought off the colonization of the mind. They are at once key subjects and proponents of resistance and liberation.

Certainly, we do not wish to echo those who invoke socio-cultural features to disguise their opposition to democracy and full human rights, claiming that there are cultural prerequisites to democracy and development. The various experiences in East Asia lead us to be skeptical with regard to the hypotheses of cultural "advantage". The same cultural prerequisites that were once judged to be hostile to development are now said to be the basis of economic "success".[10]

It would be equally dangerous to draw a similar relationship between a democracy and a given culture. The challenge, more likely, lies in fostering those democratic practices and notions contained in our cultures and spirituality in a way that will best meet the requirements of survival and dignity in the battle against Western hegemonic globalism. That is, to extract the rich lessons from struggles against Western hegemony, as opposed to the blanket rejection of all that comes from the West, because as difficult as it is to recall, there are also humanitarian values and profound critiques of power relationships that were also born and defended in the North.

Universality is indispensable. The global nature of the neo-liberal capitalist onslaught forces us also to think in global terms, to overcome the dispersion which we inherited and has always been our greatest weakness—a dispersion accentuated by the neo-liberal system itself. To transcend nationalism, without abandoning the State, to create transnational forms of participatory democracy, from the community to the international order.

In its own analysis of the V Centenary Campaign, the Continental Movement can claim that notwithstanding regional and national differences, the Campaign was successful in projecting the truth that the official history of the past 500 years was written by the invaders and that it is imperative to rewrite that history from the perspective of the indigenous, black and popular resistance.

Rethinking the left

Is there reason to believe that the current opposition being generated by globalization could connect with each other on the basis of a common goal of establishing more egalitarian, ecologically sustainable, democratic societies? The resistance campaign in this context served as an antidote to left disillusionment also afflicted with post-modernist malaise.

In fact, much of the inability of the left to build or sustain a broad-based unity and alternative stems from its general failure to recognize the revolutionary potential of the "minority" peoples' quest for self determination—this would include native peoples, but, in the United States, for example, Chicanos, Latinos, African Americans and Asians, independently of whether they proclaim themselves marxists, socialists or nationalists. The challenge is to break out of a framework that would reduce all social context to the contradiction of labour versus capital, giving a full recognition to the particular struggles for self-determination on the part of oppressed nationalities, to embrace at the level of principle, as opposed to maintaining an instrumentalist perception of national social movements.

Linking socialist values with those of the Movement would presuppose a new left recognition of the importance of community and culture, and the role these must play in any serious political rearticulation of left thought and organization. These elements are also seen as a

counter-hegemonic alternative project. It will not be easy for the left to win the confidence of new social subjects thereby leaving behind, once and for all, rigid European-derived categories of social classification or mechanistic interpretations of class struggle.

The challenge is to recognize in the indigenous, black and popular sectors a source of orientation, of reconceptualization of terms such as revolution, democracy and socialism, but also of spirituality and culture, not simply as expressions of solidarity but as sources of strategy. In the face of the renewed adulation of private property and privatization, to seek in the culture of resistance a source of inspiration for the continued defence of the collectivist communal ideals, forms of organization, and environmental compatibility.

In this context, we are encouraged by the receptivity expressed by the Sao Paulo grouping of left political forces, which at its most recent meeting in July, 1993, came to the conclusion that new concepts of socialism and democracy were required to provide for the democratic incorporation and representation in the party of broad sectorial demands. The 100 or so political parties and movements of the left from Latin America and the Caribbean expressed the "need to recognize ethnic and cultural pluralism and equality of the sexes and to incorporate these concepts into the exercise of democracy". A direct link was made between the reaffirmation of the importance of the people's struggle and the conquest of political democracy on the one hand, with the need to integrate institutional struggles with social, ethnic and cultural ones.

Towards an intercontinental alliance of the colonized

Six years after Columbus landed in the "Americas", Vasco da Gama initiated the voyage to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope, initiating the modern colonization of those latitudes or what some have termed the "500 year Reich" of confrontation between the conquerors and the conquered on a global scale.

We are indeed only beginning to recognize the importance of 1492 and 1498 to global cultural and economic evolution, and as definitive breaking points in history. The rise of Europe is explained largely (but not entirely) by the conquest and colonial accumulation, principally in America, which in turn, explains why capitalism consolidated first in Europe and not elsewhere, marking the beginning of the centre/

periphery or colonizer/colonized dichotomy that continues to characterize the world. "Europe" in this sense, is also European-settled colonies, it is the North, including Japan as "honorary whites", and the few nations, including the United States, able to escape permanent subjugation. We are thus told that there was no history before the West—just as there can be none after it—as all world history is made by diffusion from a West (or North) that invents and leads, for the rest to imitate and follow.[11]

In our region, the Campaign and later the Movement, led by the indigenous and black sectors, felt impelled to employ the "commemoration" in order to reinforce ties among native peoples of the Americas, black and popular sectors—across regions and as well as social sectors. Yet, it was also a fact that the indigenous population of the Americas (or Abya Yala, as the movement prefers to term the Western Hemisphere), some 60 million people—two million in North America and the rest in Latin America - are only a part of the some 300 million which inhabit the earth: again mostly in the South. An even stronger bond is felt between 90 million Afro-Americans and the peoples of Africa, descendants of the more than 25 million Africans—the best of their productive communities—that were brutally uprooted from their homes.

Responding to these realities and kinships, the Movement seeks to make itself one part of a larger global mobilization of oppressed native peoples seeking to link the struggles in the Americas with those taking place elsewhere. Much the same consciousness has also found expression outside the Americas, as for example, when the African governments furiously repudiated a Spanish-Latin American-Western government initiative to commemorate the 500 year anniversary of Columbus' voyage. There is also a bond felt with the proposal for a "Jubilee in 1998" launched by the "African and Asian Consultation on Spirituality" in Colombo in June 1992. According to the organizers, the 1998 campaign is called to protest the massive exploitation of Africa and Asia initiated in 1498 by the voyage of Vasco da Gama to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope. They too are demanding the cancellation of debt, the restoration of land and general reparation for what was stolen and destroyed. Also from the religious perspective, is the important work around the Kairos documents linking committed theologians in the South and North to the task of liberation.

1992 and 1998 therefore pose a critical moral and cultural challenge for the privileged sectors of Northern societies and all oppressed peoples of the South. If indeed, as Anderson argues, all community above the village level is "imagined", then why not imagine a community of the colonized peoples of the South? Why not conceive that the spiritual demands of the community can transcend national boundaries and distances, rising to challenge the legitimacy of unjust state or international orders?

Furthermore, the challenge is paralled by upsurges in popular struggles, a growing Third World presence in the North, all accompanied by new manifestations of independent thought. At the same time, Western expansion, technology and languages have also contributed to ending the isolation among our peoples. And the power centres of the North need not have a monopoly on these instruments. The Zapatista National Liberation Army, composed chiefly of indigenous *campesinos* in southern Mexico, have been exemplary in their mobilization of new technologies—including electronic mail—to disseminate information and link up with grassroots organizers worldwide who daily wage battles for many of the same causes championed by the EZLN. Specialists in anthropology, history, ecology and agronomists specializing in the region added further detail and analysis, feeding in to the "information superhighway". Internet conferences were used to post emergency communiques and circulate information about solidarity actions.[12]

Again, there is a common purpose of arriving at meaningful strategies to effectively remedy global exploitation, including the oppressive practices of local elites; to undertake, from a South and native perspective, urgent research to analyze the consequences of colonialism and neo-colonialism over the past 500 years. What we witness, therefore, is how nativism, religious, ecological and civic perspectives merge to demand retribution and responsibility from the present generations of North Americans, West Europeans and Japanese, along with native elites, who enjoy the fruits of past exploitation and continue to make immoral, undemocratic and wasteful use of most of the earth's resources. The South must confront the injustices of a global political and economic system controlled by a few governments, corporations and banking institutions who act as the new conquerors seeking to impose a single neo-liberal culture and structural adjustment programmes on the

peoples of the South. Thus, leaders of the Campaign have also participated in the meeting of PP21 held in Thailand in December 1992 and a PP21-Central America coalition serves as liaison.

In short, a common political agenda is slowly being articulated—a process perhaps that cannot be forced or imposed, yet is at once urgent in the light of the global crisis and opportune in this decade of pseudo-commemoration, to end the conquest once and for all. Thus, we find important convergence around the need to make the oppressed peoples of the world as the subject and object of our analysis and proposals; to evaluate the process and results of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized, that is to say, a process of exploitation, extermination, and destruction at the level of population, economics, environment, politics, culture and religion.

A research agenda for the South

Through inter-disciplinary research, we in the South must arrive at a common understanding of how colonialism destroyed self-sufficient, environmentally compatible societies in order to subjugate the peoples and lands of the South to the dictates of imperial states and an equally imperial market place. Of how, on the political plane, state formation became distorted and forced to respond to an external dynamic, usually resulting in authoritarianism. To witness how colonialism destroyed native cultures, and continues to colonize mentalities; to critically examine the role played by Christianity as an instrument of cultural and political colonization. To evaluate the role of religion's commitment to liberation processes so as to arrive at a macro-spiritual convergence that must necessarily complement a macro-political one.

But also to rediscover rich episodes of cultural, political and military rebellion in the face of repression. The "myth" of origin that has linked indigenous peoples over the centuries and helped sustain their identity and culture, extends also to the great majority of peoples of the South, as well as those of South origin living in the North. It is certainly not a myth in the mystical terms of the concept, but rather one founded in a common culture of resistance, however varied its manifestations.

This does not mean setting out to reinvent history, or making ethnicity a new God, but rather to recreate historical consciousness on the

basis of our own assumptions—as indeed any history is reinterpreted: to transcend the limits of historical geography, by turning to the past as a means of better understanding how our world works—an admittedly political undertaking where our prime reference is the future and how to shape it.[13]

All this is not simply an anti-Western rhetorical exercise, but rather a process which begins with a necessary reassessment of our own past, the linkages among the peoples of the South imposed by the West or North; to begin to establish the subjective and objective conditions necessary to go beyond the dialogue about our collective past and our collective present in order to gain the capacity to build a collective future for the benefit of all peoples, North and South. Our research must be interactive as we strive to study the recurring processes, dynamics and effects of cross-cultural interaction, with a particular stress on systematically drawing out comparative patterns, taking advantage of the fair amount of data and specialized studies now available that would display sensitivity to cultural nuances and the intricacies of the internal histories of the societies of the South. Above all, we must challenge the misleading myth of exceptionalism that has dominated, for example, so much of the work on the United States, and of late, seems to extend to Eastern Asia; at the same time, resist the trend towards the glorifying of cultural particularism to the point of rejecting strategically-required and historically-warranted comparisons.

We thus need to explain the nature of neo-colonialism and its compatibility with nominal independence, the new role played by the new colonizers in perpetuating dependence through unfair terms of trade and especially through the foreign debt. We need to draw out the strategic implications of our profound affinities in our current situations of oppression and the need to promote collective democratic self-determination. Above all, we ought to convey in participatory fashion the fruit of research and thought to the people in general, so that it may form a key part of a new process of conscientization and liberation through education in both the North and South. We need to replace the culture of domination that is at the core of Western expansionism, to recover art as a tool to create culture and achieve freedom, as opposed to art as a globalizing commercial enterprise, to articulate a new form of

true politics and genuine development versus the anti-politics and the anti-development of Western capitalism.

We need to bring 500 years of conquest to an end.

Endnotes

1. Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press: 1972 and *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe,1900-1900*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

2. Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, "Aboriginal People and Imperialism in the Western Hemisphere", *Monthly Review*, September, 1992, pp. 4-5.

3. Much of the same phenomena explains the appearance of European nationalism: E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, since 1780, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

4. Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, "Aboriginal People and Imperialism in the Western Hemisphere", *Monthly Review*, September, 1992, pp. 9-10.

5. "The Political Uses of Culture", *Nacla Report on the Americas*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, September/October, 1994.

6. Noam Chomsky, *Year 501, The Conquest Continues*, South End Press: Boston, 1993.

7. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Verso: London, 1991, p.12.

8. Ian Linden, "Religion and Nationalism Today", *The Month*, (London), January, 1994.

9. The scholar and activist theologian Giulio Girardi has carried a singularly important study of this subject, particularly in *Los exclu¡dos, ¨construir n la nueva historia?*, Quito, Ecuador: Centro cultural afroecuatoriano y ediciones nicarao, 1994.

10. Vinod Thomas, "Lessons to be Learnt from East Asia's Success", *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, No. 2, 1994, pp. 117-121.

11. As J.M. Blaut has argued, "There was no 'European miracle'. Africa, Asia, and Europe shared equally in the rise of capitalism prior to 1492. After 1492 Europe took the lead because of the immense wealth obtained through colonialism in America and elsewhere, not because Europeans were brighter or bolder than non-Europeans, or more modern, or more progressive, or more rational. These are myths of Eurocentric diffusionism and are best forgotten". J.M. Blaut, 1492, *The Debate on Colonialism, Eurocentrism and History*. Africa World Press, New Jersey: 1992, p. 53.

12. Deedee Halleck, "Zapatistas On-Line", *Nacla Report on the Americas*, September/October, 1994.

13. The agenda is further detailed in the resolution on the research project of the "Year of Jubilee 1998" approved on August 17, 1992 by the Consultation on African and Asian Spirituality and in Girardi, *Los Excluidos*, pp.213-214. See also the Thailand declaration of PP-21, December, 1992 and the Managua Declaration of the 500 Years of Resistance Campaign.

The Illusion of Human Rights and the Tragedy of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Mustafa Ceric

I

In the Bosnian national weekly news magazine *Ljtljan*, the prominent Bosnian writer Alija Isakovich recently said:

> The date of the twenty-fourth of August of the year of nineteen ninety-two should be marked in our school textbooks as the black date of "European culture."
>
> Indeed, there should be in the building of the Preserved National Library, a display of burnt books, the date of August 24, 1992, and the names of those who set fire to the National Library of Sarajevo. Among these books, there should be one of Dobrica Chosich (the Serbian national writer ideologue) under whose command the library was incinerated. This is somehow unusual, but this is how it is. Our children must learn what sort of academicians and litterateurs the Serbian Academy of Science and Art is producing. They must know in what kind of neighborhood we live.

And in a commentary in the daily "Oslobodjenje" on Wednesday, November 9, 1994, Senada Kamenica wrote from Sarajevo:

> . . . when Ejup Ganic, the vice-president of the Bosnian Federation protested to General Gobilliar about the repeated bloodshed of the innocent (Bosnian children) and asked him:
>
> "Will you call in NATO or not?' General Gobilliar coolly answered with his counter-question: "What happened?" "Two children have been

killed,"—Ganic told him. Mr Gobilliar asked again, as if he was talking about the weather forecast: "Where did the shelling come from?" "You should know where the shelling came from! That is your job," Ganic calmly said.

"Perhaps, General Gabilliar did not know where the shelling came from. But the fact that he is not an exception in his ignorance cannot enrage us any more. It cannot make us sad either. Our tears have gone dry anyway. And even if they haven't, who cares about these children?" concludes Senada Kamenica, the Bosnian commentator for the Sarajevo daily "Oslobodjenje".

II

These two pieces of writing clearly illustrate the feelings of the Bosnians about the current state of affairs of human rights.

The inaction of those who are invited and sent on behalf of humanity to protect human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina is matched by ignorance and confusion. The world is witnessing for the first time in the history of humankind a genocide against an entire nation. Those who are supposed to stop this genocide, are perpetrating ignorance of and confusion about the reality. By doing so, they place equal blame on the murderers and their victims: the murderers because of their open killings and the victims because of their resistance to the aggression. This is one of the many paradoxes in Bosnia-Herzegovina that is produced by the policies of some supposedly big European centres of democracy and human rights. I hope that someone will have the time and patience to count all these paradoxes or, hypocrisies of European politicians which common sense is incapable of accepting. Here we would like to mention only a few of these paradox-hypocrisies:

1. They have recognised the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a sovereign state, but they do not allow the lifting of the arms embargo for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina to defend themselves.

2. They say that the borders of a sovereign state cannot be changed by force, but they accept the creation of Greater Serbia at the expense of the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina as *fait accompli.*

3. They are advocating a multiethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina, but ignore the presence of the Muslim cultural component in multicultural Bosnia-Herzegovina.

4. They preach freedom and democracy, but they await the Bosnians' surrender to the force of fascism

5. They say that the acceptance of peace will be rewarded, but the Bosnian people are severely punished by the criminal activities in the city of Sarajevo and elsewhere because the Bosnian Government has accepted the plan of the so-called contact-group, whereas the Serbs have been rewarded by the lifting of sanctions against the fascist regime in Belgrade because the Serb criminals in Bosnia-Herzegovina have bluntly rejected the peace-plan of the contact-group

6. They are calling for the respect of humanitarian law in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but they have implemented none of the United Nations' resolutions regarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

III

It is our right, therefore, to pose serious questions to all individuals, international institutions and agencies that claim to be concerned about human rights in the world and ask them:

Where is your voice in Bosnia-Herzegovina? Where is your commitment to humanity? Where are those European humanists who are watching the Serbian concentration camps for Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina? What have their books on humanism been written for? Aren't these humanists the teachers of those European politicians who openly participate in the slaughter of Bosnians just because they are Muslims? No, you cannot say that you haven't heard yet! That you don't know! Please turn on your television set! Don't be afraid! We Bosnians are not afraid to be the target in a hunting field! Why should you be afraid to sit back and watch an exciting movie of gladiators in the comfort of your warm home with your warm family?

> What has happened to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? To the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights? To those other United Nations Human Rights Conventions? Are these Declarations still valid? Or are they not valid anymore? Or they are valid only for a certain group of people? Or are they forgotten? Or, as General Gobilliar would ask us: "Where did these Declarations come from?"

General Gobilliar can afford not to know these Declarations because of the immoral policy he is faithfully executing in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but we in Bosnia-Herzegovina cannot afford not to teach our children the fact that the Charter of the United Nations (1945) begins with a reaffirming statement :

> a faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

We cannot afford to teach our children that the UN Charter is not meant for all human persons, nor for all nations and states, nor is it meant for the weak and unprotected.

Our children will conclude rightly that the UN statement is meant for those who are strong, those who possess the Soviet-designed missiles SAM-2, known in the former Soviet Union as the V-75 Dvina, by way of which the Serbian criminals could in the face of the so-called United Nations Protection Force launch the bloody attacks on the so-called safe areas in Bosnia-Herzegovina killing the innocent Bosnian, mainly Muslim, population of Gihach (see *New Straits Times*, Nov. 16, 1994, p. 23).

Our children should also know that the stated purposes of the United Nations:

> to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples ... [and] to achieve international co-operation . . . in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion . . .

do not apply to those human beings who dare to profess the religion of Islam, known as Muslims, especially if they happen to live in the old continent, known as Europe which is also famous for the self-proclaimed praise for its tradition of *liberte, egalitte* and *fraternite.*

Because if you identify yourself as a Muslim in Europe, in the internationally recognized Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, you will be put into concentration camps (400,000 Bosnian Muslims male and female alike have experienced the Serbian camps of killing, torture and humiliation). And if you are a Muslim female you will be raped (50,000 Muslim women have been raped by the Serbs). If you are a Muslim and you have your property in the area where the Serbs have their military force (Banja Luka, Prijedor, Sanski Most, Bijeljina, etc.), you will be ethnically cleansed for the sake of the Serbian-European kind of *literte, egalite* and *fraternite.*

If you are a Muslim who has his special house of worship (the mosque), the Serbs will destroy that mosque, cleanse the place and make a parking-lot of it. The Serbs have so far destroyed one thousand mosques in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

And if you live in Sarajevo, the Serbian criminals may perform mass-killings or massacres in the face of the UNPROFOR, whose General MacKenzie will then report to the world that you are killing yourself in order to invoke international military intervention.

And if you are a Muslim living in Europe, in the area of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and you are attacked by Serbian fascists from the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), you have no right to resistance to oppression, you have no right to self-defence because of the safety of those (British and French soldiers) who have come to Bosnia-Herzegovina on behalf of the United Nations to protect the crimes of the Serb fascists and to obscure the implementation of the thirty-nine resolutions that the Security Council adopted between 25 September 1991 and 7 May 1993 on the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Why can these resolutions not be implemented? These resolutions cannot be implemented because the commanders (of UNPROFOR) say they cannot do anything that would be considered unfriendly or offensive to the Serbs (see *New Straits Times*, Nov. 16, 1994, p. 11).

Can the Serbs do unfriendly and offensive things to others (Bosnian Muslims in particular)? If you dare to ask this question you might be called an Islamic fundamentalist and a danger to the security of Europe and democracy (see "Bosnians Fear a Rising Islamic Authoritarianism" by Roger Cohen in *The New York Times International*, Monday, October 10, 1994). Knowing what the European diplomats like to hear to assuage their guilt, Mr Cohen has developed the thesis of the Islamic threat in Bosnia-Herzegovina which is based on the premise that those Bosnians who want, by their own free will and choice, to observe the basic tenets of Islam such as not eating pork, not consuming drugs and alcohol, freedom from imposed mixed marriages, visiting the mosque and the like, are more threatening to the principles of democracy than the fascist Serbs who have destroyed a thousand mosques, expelled a million people from their homes, killed 250,000 Bosnians Muslims, burnt to ashes the National Library of Sarajevo and ignored the fact that the city of Sarajevo has been made a legalized concentration camp by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali for almost three years. These are the facts: the Sarajevo airport is still closed and permanently under Serb terrorist attacks; the whole city is without a regular supply of water, electricity and food; the Serb snipers are very active in killing Sarajevo children, old men and women; no one can go out or go into Sarajevo without the permission of UNPROFOR. In short, the city of Sarajevo is the biggest prison in history. All this is happening with the knowledge of the Security Council of the United Nations and of all other international organizations for human rights.

Of course, everyone has the right to his ignorance, to his falsehoods, and his own prejudices. However, no one has the right to impose his ignorance, his falsehoods and his prejudices as universal standards, as universal truths about another's culture and religion. Furthermore, after what has happened to Bosnians, we think that no one, least of all Mr. Cohen, has the right to teach them morality.

IV

The case of Bosnia is a reflection of the spiritual and moral state of our world. In Bosnia all laws have been broken—God's laws, man's laws and natural laws. Who did this? These laws have been broken by the

international community, not by Bosnians, in that, once the Serbs saw that no one would act to protect these laws, they broke them one after another.

So, when you think of Bosnia, think of yourself, because the case of Bosnia is becoming a universal test, the test of our honesty and sincerity about war or peace, about revenge or reconciliation, about fascism or democracy.

We Bosnians are for peace, not for war, because we believe God has created men and women for construction, not for destruction; for co-operation, not for obstruction; for goodwill, not for mutual hatred.

We are for reconciliation, not for revenge, because we believe that those who butchered our children, raped our women, destroyed our mosques, burnt our libraries, expelled our people, and humiliated human dignity will be faced with their crimes sooner or later and justice will be done against them, if not before the International Court of Justice, it is certain that they will meet the Divine Court of Justice.

We are for democracy not for Marxism because we believe that it is not possible to have human life on this planet without multireligious, multiethnic, and multiracial societies.

I hope that this conference, which is organized to strengthen positive human relations, will encourage us with concrete actions to achieve a just peace, a decent reconciliation and a genuine democracy in Bosnia-Herzegovina and around the world.

The Betrayal of Bosnia-Herzegovina— by the Champions of Human Rights

Ahmad Kamil Jaffar

May I first of all congratulate our three hosts tonight—the Just World Trust (JUST), Institute Kajian Dasar (IKD) and Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM)—for organising this function to raise funds to finance the adoption of three villages near Mostar, Konjic and Visoko under their Village Adoption Project Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

At a time when the very survival of Bosnians as a people and of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a nation state seem to be teetering on the brink, it may seem innocuous to speak about adopting villages in Bosnia; but this is definitely not so. Our friends in Bosnia need help in various forms. In a situation bordering on desperation, the adoption of villages to help provide basic needs to secure life and to allow people to continue living is certainly appropriate, timely, and above all a noble effort.

While many people in the world seem ready to let the Serbs determine the fate of the Bosnians, we in Malaysia should not despair; because our Bosnian friends have refused to succumb. We should never be a party to those looking for excuses to do nothing, or to put it differently to do everything in order to do nothing—and fall into the mental trap that nothing can be done about Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is appalling that Europe and America are letting the Serbs succeed without challenge. It is simply amoral that the Bosnians, who have been

* One of the highlights of the Rethinking Human Rights conference was a fund-raising dinner organised by Just World Trust (JUST), the Institute of Policy Studies (IKD) and the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement (ABIM) to finance the reconstruction of villages in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

under siege for more than two years and deprived of protection as well as the means to defend themselves, now stand accused of provocation and escalating the conflict. This is perversity of the highest order. It is also perverse to tell the world that the Bosnians cannot be protected because the lives of UNPROFOR troops would be endangered. It is the permanent members of the Security Council which are responsible for insisting on peacekeeping rules that have put United Nations soldiers into a situation of dishonour. The senior-most UN officials on the ground have brought nothing but further discredit to the United Nations Organisation.

Bihac is crumbling under the Serb onslaught; and Bihac is one of the "safe areas" declared by the UN to be insulated and protected against such an attack or any attack.

UN Security Council Resolution 836 had given authority to UNPROFOR to use force in reply to bombardments against the safe areas by any of the parties, or armed incursions into them, or in the event of any deliberate obstruction in or around these areas to their freedom of movement.

Yet, Lieutenant General Michael Rose and Yashushi Akashi rejected the effective use of air power by hiding behind the charade of the so-called need to deliver only proportionate responses. Why has a "safe area" such as Bihac been allowed to become an area under siege and a target of attack? They treat victims and aggressors alike. They say the UN must remain neutral. Who is responsible for rendering Security Council Resolutions 824 and 836 impossible to implement? This question is best answered by those most responsible and able to act but continue to fail to act. Why is there a total paralysis?

It is a sad commentary on the concept of international responsibility when the question of whether Serb advances should be halted is being weighed against considerations of whether the cohesion of NATO will be affected. It would seem a conclusion has been reached that the possible obliteration of a nation state named Bosnia-Herzegovina is a small price to pay for the preservation of NATO's integrity and the avoidance of turmoil in Russia.

I wonder also what has happened to the Western claim to defend democracy and champion human rights throughout the world. Why has Bosnia-Herzegovina been made an exception?

To allow Bosnia-Herzegovina to disintegrate is to condone the demise of a state founded upon a multiethnic and multireligious life based on democratic institutions—in favour of one based on racial and religious purity established by genocide, ethnic cleansing, mass expulsions and the destruction of religious and cultural monuments. What has happened to European ideals of justice and fair play? Bosnia-Herzegovina is very much a part of Europe! Could there be a secret agenda somewhere?

Two years ago, there was a lot of talk about grand conspiracies and secret agendas. Milesovic's dreams of a Greater Serbia seems nearer fulfilment, since there are voices suggesting that the Serbs might yet be persuaded to stop the carnage if the Serbs, in Bosnia as well as in Croatia, are allowed to join in a federation with Serbia and Montenegro. What is now happening certainly provides the basis for the growing belief that a strong Serbia through the integration of Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia would ensure the security of Europe or, to put it bluntly, establish a balance of power in Europe. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia can therefore be sacrificed. A small price indeed weighed against the agendas of some European countries.

It is only the refusal of the Bosnians to accept defeat, from the very beginning of the war, which has created an obstacle to the evil plans of the Serbs.

The continuance of the arms embargo has no other effect than to tilt the balance of power, or rather the balance of terror, in favour of the Serbs. The British and the French have consistently argued that a lifting of the arms embargo would unleash a bloodbath and prolong the war. There is already a bloodbath—thanks to the so-called champions of justice. I do not see the end of the war either, as long as the fire in the bellies of the Bosnians and Croats continues to burn. It is an inescapable fact that the maintenance of the embargo has served the interests and military objectives of the Serbs. We are witnessing the return to Europe of sterile wars for cruel and vain ambitions. As someone said, the powerful democracies of Europe and North America looked evil in the eye and blinked!

There is no need for me to belabour the point that the Bosnians have the legal and moral right to defend themselves. Malaysia advocates and would support a lifting of the UN arms embargo against

Bosnia-Herzegovina. We will continue to fight for the right of nations to defend themselves as set out in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The major players, instead of planning deterrence against the Serbs, are exerting pressures on the Bosnian Government to accept defeat. It defies logic how a single ethnic community made up of racists, psychopaths, murderers, criminals and rapists can be allowed to humble and humiliate both the United Nations and the most powerful military bloc in the world right in Europe's own backyard.

It is a civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina—they say—that's why not much can be done about it. It is a frightening prospect indeed if the international community which has abandoned Bosnia-Herzegovina so miserably will allow aggressions to be conducted with impunity in other parts of the world. Would other ex-Yugoslavia breakaway states—Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia—become free pickings for the Serbs as well?

Malaysia shall not rest in its quest for international justice and fair play. We shall continue to raise our voice against aggression, no matter where it might be. For small nations, the United Nations—we believe—can be the defender of last resort but, the United Nations must change. We shall continue to do our part to effect that change.

At this very moment, members of the Western contact group are also considering how changes could be made to the peace plan they formulated previously to take into account the new realities on the ground. One of the changes would involve a redrawing of the map, obviously intended to appease the Serbs. To them the consequences of the change including the further destruction of properties, the intentional elimination of ethnic and cultural identities and the added suffering of many more displaced people from areas designated for the Serbs, however loathsome or despicable, are regarded as humanly natural and hence acceptable. Are they clear about the impact of such a scheme?

We have not lost hope for Bosnia-Herzegovina. That is why the Malaysian Government wants the UNPROFOR to stay with its mission there and we want to continue to be part of it. Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to burn, but as long as the fire in the bellies of the Bosnians continues to burn at the same time, justice will yet be achieved—not through the help of those self-appointed champions and defenders of

democracy, human rights and justice—but by the courage and supreme sacrifice of the Bosnians and the Croats themselves.

It is therefore heartening for me to know that the people of Malaysia fully share this view of the Government. Your effort tonight is an example which bears testimony to that. I therefore sincerely wish the organisers great success in this Village Adoption Project Bosnia-Herzegovina. I would like to add my personal appeal to all Malaysians to contribute generously and support this humane and very worthy cause.

Humans without Rights: the Intellectual Dimension of Western Global Domination and its Consequences for the Human Rights of Five-sixths of Humanity

Claude Alvares

Decades from now—and I expect sooner rather than later—our descendants are bound to wonder how five-sixths of humanity allowed their lives to be so easily run according to the dictates and needs of the other one-sixth. And that too, often against their own survival interests and futures. If force had been used to ensure such compliance—such as what America used in the Iraq War, for instance—one might be able to understand such a situation. Yet even without the use of an arsenal as formidable as that, five-sixths of the world already are, it appears, as badly demolished as the Iraqis after the war, with options increasingly limited, their creativity crippled and deeper forms of economic, political and cultural serfdom looming on the horizon.

The struggle for control over the mind

The demolition I am talking about is the demolition of the mind. One may not see signs of it if one sees the city-state of Singapore or the Makati business centre in Manila or the gaggle of five-star hotels in Delhi or even the relative prosperity of Kuala Lumpur, but these are also expressions of it in a way. If one digs a little deeper than the surface

impression, one sees that (except perhaps for the Japanese and the Chinese) the intellectual devastation is more or less complete.

The book trade, for instance, is completely dominated by the publishing houses of London and New York. So is the media, in which the Brown and the Black must give enormous attention to the activities of the White, including the failed marriage of the Prince of Wales and his princess. But there are more insidious collapses: the question of law, medical therapy, educational innovation, academic work, economic management, development theory, agricultural research, or human rights; in all these spheres, we are led by the nose by the intellectual class of the West since our eyes were effectively punctured several decades ago. Even the nice critics of the unwanted and undesirable aspects of policies in these areas are located in the West.

As Ashis Nandy has said, both the game and the game rules are set by the West, so even the opposition must be in the same language and vocabulary of the West, for the West is still the ultimate arbiter of categories. Debate, if it is carried out, must be in terms of these categories or it is not legitimate. There is no political space available for non-players.

This was not always so.

Several efforts were once made to restore some balance to this unprecedented state of affairs. Several decades ago, we had some fundamental challenges to the Western way of life with the independence movement in India led by Gandhi in which agitators burned Western goods. There have also been numerous, more specific instances of resistance, from the UNESCO effort for a new information order to even smaller initiatives like the use of Indian writings by East African universities in the 1960s. Even today, India has a renascent *swadeshi* movement for thrashing multinationals and Western style culture. Similarly, some Islamic countries have also remained profoundly antipathetic to the West. (This conference, we should note, is itself a form of such resistance.)

However, a critical mass is yet to be achieved within the South as a whole. We have occasional flashpoints which glow for a while and then die as quickly. So despite being the vast majority, we have been unable as yet to strike a sustained, irretrievable blow that would inflict permanent damage to this plague of the West. And this has had frightful consequences.

Marginalisation of the non-Western intellectual traditions

Five hundred years ago, there was scarcely any intellectual domination of one society by another society's intellectuals. Today, that scenario stands dramatically altered: the intellectual elite of the one-sixth dominates the conditions of life of the rest of humankind, decides what is good for it, what it should do, how it ought to organize its affairs, what kinds of seeds it ought to plant.

In his seminal book, *Orientalism*, Edward Said argued that one consequence of the domination of the non-Western world was the creation of an entire political discourse which he dubbed "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views on it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient."

So even if knowledge is power, power is also knowledge. Power decides knowledge. Those without power are not permitted to either decide knowledge or legitimate it. We know from our own culture in India, for instance, that the Brahmin was the source of knowledge, while others could only be recipients, and still others were considered unfit even to receive. Knowledge reflects power, it reflects interests, specifically a culture's interests.

Unlike the traditional Brahminic restrictions on knowledge, however, the major assumption that drives the present intellectual circus is that only the successful, the conquerors really, have the prerogative to produce knowledge or science; the conquered have no such capacity or privilege. There has been no better declaration of such a view than that expressed by anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss who in his famous Smithsonian lecture bluntly stated:

> Anthropology is not a dispassionate science like astronomy, which springs from the contemplation of things at a distance. It is the outcome of a historical process which has made the larger part of mankind subservient to the other, and during which millions of innocent human beings have had their resources plundered and their institutions and beliefs destroyed, whilst they themselves were ruthlessly killed, thrown into bondage, and contaminated by diseases they were unable to resist.

> Anthropology is daughter to this era of violence: its capacity to assess more objectively the facts pertaining to the human condition reflects, on the epistemological level, a state of affairs in which one part of mankind treated the other as an object.
>
> A situation of this kind cannot be soon forgotten, much less erased. It is not because of its mental endowments that only the Western world has given birth to anthropology, but rather because exotic cultures, treated by us as mere things, could be studied accordingly, as things. We did not feel concerned by them whereas we cannot help their feeling concerned by us. Between our attitude towards them and their attitude towards us, there is and can be no parity.

What Levi-Strauss stated so candidly about anthropology is not really restricted to that "science". Every other product of the Western intellect is based on a similar assumption. We have become things; things do not have rights. Take, as an apt illustration, the latest industry that is being glamourized across the planet: tourism. It does little but convert the Third World, its people, its nature into things to be handled, abused, consumed and photographed.

The question here is not whether such assumptions are true or false. That is wholly irrelevant. While an assumption is accepted, it remains true. Once it is rejected, it is false. Thus, it is whether one accepts or rejects an assumption that matters most. Thus, if one looks at the intellectual products of the non-Western world, one should not be dismayed to find that they too are based on the same assumptions, namely, that those producing them, being conquered societies or victims, have little choice but to submit to or collaborate and be studied in a grand programme run by the one-sixth.

The metamorphoses of human rights

Rather than take a few specialist social sciences like economics or anthropology, I would like to show for the purposes of this paper, how Western science and technology generally, both products of Western culture and reflecting Western interests, both significant corporate institutions dealing with the non-Western world also operate under a set of questionable assumptions. I hope to demonstrate that Western science

and technology and the form of intellectual hegemony they represent are the biggest threats to human rights across the planet, not human rights as narrowly defined by Western liberal regimes, but human rights as we define them. I will argue that the global domination of the West through its science and technology regime in fact provides the West with an innocuous but effective instrument for depriving the five-sixths of their human rights in an absolute sense.

The idea that every person, just because he is a person, has certain inalienable rights, and the codification of these rights in written charters, are both fairly recent in human history. For example, political power has devolved from monarchies, aristocracies, the nobility, elite ruling classes to the *demos* over a span of some 200 years in the West.

The rights of certain groups (slaves) in the Greek polises around 500 BC, or of the medieval serfs of the 12th century AD, or of Blacks and other Third World peoples in the age of colonialism and expansion, either did not exist even in theory or were restricted in the prevailing scheme of things. Today, Western style democracies have codified certain constitutional rights of all their citizens. This is decidedly an improvement.

Other cultures seem to have had other arrangements for guaranteeing such rights. According to the radically new perspective of historian Dharampal and others, a majority of India's villages were functioning republics founded on a model of reciprocity distinctive of the subcontinent and not found elsewhere. Rights to subsistence and to effective participation in public affairs, were guaranteed to all those who were part of the community the village constituted. Appropriate fiscal arrangements underwrote these rights to the last detail.

Though these fiscal arrangements seem to have been unique to India itself, the guarantee of subsistence rights to all who were part of the community seems also to have prevailed in certain European culture areas in the medieval period, where, as Ivan Illich has shown, those with no direct means of subsistence, or impeded by manifest incapacity or handicap, including beggars, widows and cripples, but who were part of the community, had inalienable rights to maintenance from the commonweal. In India, such rights seem to have been available to all, normal, and handicapped, and even granted to strangers, like travellers and pilgrims.

The point I want to emphasize here is really quite simple: the spread or devolution of rights in the West entailed the automatic restriction of the absolute rights previously available to the older centres of power, based upon divine right and rule. Democratizing rights also meant reducing the arbitrariness of the law. Rights would no longer be subject to personal whim, expressed thumbs up or thumbs down. The history of the development of such constitutional rights can therefore also be seen as a record of the restriction of some people's absolute rights, while the majority found its rights recognized and enlarged.

Thus, the trend towards the universalization of rights is unmistakable and there can be no going back on this political development. Modern democracies do not recognize slaves or lesser beings in their constitutions (even though modern economies do). These constitutions may be anthropocentric, which is a serious matter as far as the rights of other species are concerned; and it could be argued that their disavowal of slave labour in their own societies is precisely because they are now dependent for their standard of living on slave labour in societies made dependent on them: the numerous Free Trade Zones in the Third World are a practical illustration of this. (Today, with Structural Adjustment Programmes [SAPs] and devaluation, the concept of a special 'zone' has become redundant: the entire country is now part of the slave trade.) But the Universal Declaration on Human Rights is still a distinct achievement.

Modern science and human rights

After surveying this domain of constitutional rights, we discover that a reverse development has been set in motion within the sphere of what, for lack of a proper term, must be called epistemologic or intellect rights. The movement here has been in the opposite direction, of not devolution but concentration, aristocratization and restriction. This is an unusual but scarcely noted development and needs detailed consideration.

In human history as a rule, knowledge required for survival and more, remained mostly decentralized and radically dispersed. Literally millions of arts and technologies, all using science, and productive of millions of crafts, culture ideas and symbols, composed the rich diversity of human experience up to the period of the scientific and industrial

revolutions. In fact, in many ways, the "technical diversity" of the human species came close to parallel the "genetic diversity" of nature itself. Similarly with the sciences: Chinese, Korean, Islamic, Indian.

The scientific revolution constitutes the watershed: beyond it a new myth is fabricated that for the first time in history, human reason has discovered a method of producing knowledge that earlier was only available via inspired scriptures. The technique is so foolproof, the myth announces, that the knowledge acquired as a result of it is "objective", non-negotiable.

This opinion was bound to conflict with democracy, and it soon did.

Devotees of modern science, however, claim that its so-called objective knowledge is not achieved by bargaining or choice and is therefore outside the sphere of politics. For this reason, in principle, one is no longer at liberty to choose scientific knowledge as one among other several kinds of equally valid knowledge systems. Modern science is the new and only scripture.

No one is free to reject the statements of science, as he is free, for instance, (and is often encouraged) to reject the statements of religion or art. Anyone who refuses to accept the basic scientific world-view risks being labelled ignorant or, obscurantist, in addition to a long list of pejoratives.

Thus, the very principles that make up the very nature of science and which have allegedly contributed to its allegedly unique success, are not to be applied to science itself. For instance, science accumulates and advances its knowledge by dissent, by the conflict of hypotheses. But no dissent is permissible from outside the scientific imperium, either of its content or of its method.

Science, to be science, tends to concentrate and arbitrate all knowledge, and as the concentration increases, as the need for certification increases, the less democratic it becomes. Access to knowledge itself becomes a matter of privilege and special training. The non-scientist layman is then no longer capable of creating science. By the same yardstick, non-Western societies, alleged to be culturally deficient in Galilean science, are also similarly incapable of achieving anything similar. Both are encouraged to dissolve their existing repertoires of knowledge in favour of the new scripture.

The non-negotiability of scientific knowledge, however, is a myth elaborately constructed over centuries, fed by a willed illiteracy or feigned ignorance among its propagandists concerning how it actually negotiated its rise, the corpus of its achievements, or willed its direction. The scientific method, seen as above emotion, caste, community, language, religion, and, acultural and transnational, became the preferred and primary instrument for a category of knowledge not only above the interests of all, but more important, enforceable on all. The ready agreement on this position between conservatives, liberals, Marxists, communists and socialists indicates more their common and shared roots in Western culture than any special enlightenment.

Thus, under the suzerainty of modern science, the exercise of independent intellect rights are no longer recognized, and ordinary people—the folk—are considered no longer capable on their own initiative or activity to provide or attain true and certain knowledge or knowledge of any validity or worth. Thus, this politically significant right is taken away from all within the dictatorship of modern science.

Knowledge leading to deprivation of human rights

This, as I noted earlier, is diametrically opposite to democratic functioning, where rights are also unique and unbargainable and belong to people primarily because they are people. In societies within Asia including China, individuals, in fact, may even reject the idea that they have rights which are distinguishable from or separate from their family identities. In the case of tribal societies, rights may only be understood in a community sense. However, all such rights whether rooted in the individual, the family or the community do include the right to claim true knowledge, and the right to reject impersonal knowledge. This right includes the power to certify knowledge on any aspect of reality.

For the ruling classes, which felt that human rights had been too early democratized or unnecessarily so or too readily guaranteed, the myth of the scientific method provided a new instrument by which they could take back with their right hand what they had earlier dispensed through the left. Planning, science and technology, the rule by technocracy, became the principal means for usurping the people's right to the

domain of knowledge, for dismissing the people's right to create or maintain their own knowledge, for extinguishing the people's right to maintain and develop their own ecological niches.

It was therefore predictable that in such circumstances, democracy would be redefined now as 'participation': the people would participate in a pre-conceived design of development set up for their benefit by informed leaders and qualified technocrats. This has remained the essence of the development project and its authoritarianism for the past several decades. The design of the development project would always be outside popular competence and therefore, control.

Here the role of the Third World state has been crucial: it assumed the exclusive right to force people to be free in their own interests. The state does not recognise one's right not to be developed. It claims a right to develop everybody, whether he/she wants to or not, on the basis of a vision of progress set out in the blueprint supplied by Western ethnoscience.

Thus, in every Third World country, the state has attempted to eliminate all so-called low-efficiency processes, modes of knowledge and technique, in village, cottage or informal sectors, and to hand over the jobs, and eventually the resources involved, for machines based on modern science and technology. It has favoured the rights of technology against the rights of people, and considered largely the rights of those who own technology, control and direct it, or support it because it is "progress", and ignored the reality of the rest.

Millions of people, hundreds of communities, from fisherfolk in the fishing industry to the tribals in forests, have had their human rights extinguished, precisely because the state has ruled that development must be based on modern science and technology. This is the core of the human rights problem generated by the imposition of Western science and technology.

The modern state's prime interest in such development is because of its potential for compromising, eroding and oftentimes, severely diminishing personal or group autonomy, and the creativity that goes with it. Once epistemologic rights are denied, the state can proceed to use so-called scientific criteria to supplant such rights by officially defined needs.

Hence, the state's continuing drive for newer technologies, even as the earlier ones create more poverty and unemployment. Both the

superchip of the electronic age, and biotechnology's boasts of superproduction, are basically set to further concentrate the production processes in fewer hands, to be directed by even fewer minds. If the majority of the population is to be rendered redundant, then God damn them. They have been rendered redundant already at the market stage, they need to be rendered redundant now at the planning stage, and later, at the resource use stage. Their resources, or rather, the resources they survive on now, must sooner or later be made available for the superior processing of the supermachines. And who will be there to argue against the need for further efficiency in an age of looming scarcity?

The consequences of that view are all too inevitable: it was not too long ago that Jacob Bronowski in the *Ascent of Man* proposed that Western man had revolutionized the world because he was "active", whereas his Oriental counterpart remained behind due to his "passivity". And recently, V. S. Naipaul, the most successful Black Englishman of our time, wrote that those who are not active also need not be shown compassion.

The very definition of "efficiency" has been changed by "power". What we normally understand by "efficiency" is explained in a simple example given by Felix Paturi. He wrote: "For 50 harvested energy units, the American farmer invests 250 fuel energy units, the Chinese farmer only a single unit of human energy. This means simply that the primitive countryman of the East works at an efficiency rate of 5000 per cent, and the US farmer, equipped with the most advanced technical aids, at an efficiency rate of only 20 per cent." However, it is American agribusiness that is being promoted and expanded all across the globe. Why?

C.V. Seshadri has shown that modern science actually uses another definition of efficiency to further its own cause. He has argued that the Second Law of Thermodynamics is an ethnocentric law in so far as it favours the definitions of energy and efficiency in a way calculated to strengthen and direct the allocation of resources for big-industry purposes, even if this is to be at the cost of depriving the rest of the population access to them. The central concept of science is in fact fused with one kind of resource utilization.

In this way, development based on modern science and technology constitutes a dynamic system, committed to installing such efficiency and productivity even if this means compromising the survival

possibilities and niches of larger and larger masses of people. We see here the closest possible linkages between Western ethnoscience, large industry and cultural interests.

To recapitulate, then, on two counts, modern science and technology, the principal corporate institutions that the West uses in its relationships with the Third World, have become a major threat to human rights worldwide.

Science as ideology, as a non-negotiable picture or description of the world, is being used as a stick to beat trans-scientific, or folk-scientific descriptions, since these do not conduce to political control.

The second avenue for deprivation of human rights is via technology. Here we find a consistent bias against so-called low efficiency processes, jobs, even natural processes. This bias is the result of a more generalized discrimination against indigenous traditions, cosmologies and cosmogonies, against alternate ideas of time and perceptions of reality: in brief, epistemologies or intellect products that remain external to the scientific imperium. All imperiums are intolerant and breed violence. The arrogance of modern science leads it to actively replace alternate descriptions with its own. While both science and technology become the driving force behind the market, they must actively distrust a market place of cosmologies.

Democracy without intellectual rights, however, is an empty gift. In principle, every one has rights but when science is invoked, all lose their rights except if they are wealthy and powerful. Dams, nuclear reactors, large industries have more secure rights than the millions of unprivileged people who must make way for them.

The dominant intellectual system

One other important aspect of this situation needs to be highlighted here and this is the manner in which the aura surrounding modern science has transferred to other products of the same intellectual tradition—so that after a while, whether we deal with history, or economics or development theory or any other discipline, a text by a Westerner has more authority than equivalent products from elsewhere. This has converted nearly all our colleges, universities and research centres into zoos full of monkey scholars who ape every single theme and read every book provided by Western intellectuals and intellect workers, from

psychology and sociology to education and political science. These so-called sciences purvey a few quantitative techniques but carry in addition a whole load of unquestioned and unacceptable assumptions: that Western societies are like ours; that we should organize our societies like theirs; that our environment in the tropics is not dissimilar to theirs. Policies based on such science are then used to further undermine and impoverish people and societies.

To take just one recent example: for decades now, agricultural research in Third World countries has been directed through international agricultural research centres controlled by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). It has now been calculated that through this system, germplasm worth $3.5 billion has been transferred annually from the gene rich Third World to the countries of the North.

The origins of this wave of intellectual dependency are historical too. They go back to the beginning of the 19th century and are symbolized forcefully by the character and imagination of Lord Babington Macaulay who invented the educational system that still rules us today whether in Malaysia, India or Sri Lanka. Thereafter, we have adopted the manner of governance and law-making installed by colonial governments. Such systems were not created by us but were designed to control us. They reflected the values of bourgeois civil society and its ethnoscience.

On this alien and alienating base, we have sought to formulate policies based upon the unquestioned application of Western knowledge from all the various disciplines, thus causing enormous hardship and distress to our people. As a result, the gap between ordinary people and the universities everywhere has widened beyond understanding. But while the ordinary people continue to maintain their dignity in the increasingly difficult circumstances thrust on them, those in the universities have undermined their own dignity by turning themselves into caricatures.

The severest challenge to such a manner of organizing our societies came from Mahatma Gandhi in *Hind Swaraj*. In that slim book, Gandhi declared that modern civilization—or bourgeois civil society organized according to the English pattern—was a foul way of going about the business of living even for the English. He ended up declaring that banishment to Andaman and Nicobar Islands was not enough

punishment for anyone who did anything to propagate European civilization elsewhere. Today, this superstructure is more effectively in place than during his time!

Probing our intellectual malaise

Where then do we go from here? Towards the end of the 20th century, fully 500 years after the voyage of Columbus and Vasco da Gama, we must take certain steps, mindful of the principle that what we create is ours, what others create is theirs. The entire intellectual system that underpins the present political order reflects the interests of Western culture and can never represent ours. There is no such creature by the name of globalization, only the proposal to extend a certain culture's hegemony to the rest of the planet, submerging and suppressing 'the others'.

There is nothing about this culture that is in any way universal or so compelling that it has to be given the primacy of ranking. Neither has it any compelling logic, reason or science that makes it reasonable to desire. Its science is its science, one ethnoscience among many, nothing beyond that.

What steps would be therefore fruitful? There are several, the most important of which is a scholarly investigation into the illness that we call Europe. Our Europology must enable us to figure out what is this pathological urge that drives the people of Europe and America to trudge to every corner of the world, seeking to interfere in all human activities and natural processes, ruining the landscape with their nightmares, leaving the planet in a constant, ceaseless stress and turmoil for the rest of creation. A Europology properly undertaken will enable us to discover the true dreadfulness of Europe—the pointless drive for efficiency, productivity, homogeneity, economy, achievement—which ordinary people here find culturally abhorrent and politically repulsive; the urge to homogenize the globe, eradicate tradition, flatten cultural diversity, manufacture homogeneous individuals. No doubt this drive has been successfully achieved with regard to Europe's own citizens. But why attempt to mire us too in the same mud? Don't our cultures and religions tell us there is something better to live and hope for than having machines as the only measure of ourselves?

Science, Ecology and Human Rights

Vandana Shiva

Scientific and technological reductionism have been key components of the "civilising mission" ideology that justified as well as made possible Western global domination. This reductionism has multiple aspects and consequences.

1. The first aspect of scientific reductionism is historical. It involves the forgetting and the denial of the contribution of other cultures to the development of Western science and technology. It treats the West's intellectual evolution as evolution without debts to others, and then regards those appropriated traditions as measures of Western superiority and non-Western inferiority. The result of this reductionism has been the actual destruction of non-Western knowledge traditions.

2. The second aspect of the reductionism characteristic of Western science is epistemological reductionism. At one level, this derives from historical reductionism and leads to recognition of only one knowledge tradition as science. At another level, it is based on the assumption that the world is atomistic and uniform, and understanding its broken fragments gives us the knowledge of the whole. This mechanistic worldview is then treated as a measure of scientificity.

3. The third aspect of scientific reductionism is social, cultural and ethical. It involves the transformation of science and technology as human constructions and social means into ends in themselves. Western civilisation has converted its scientific tools into a new sacred cow which can neither be questioned nor changed. Society is expected to adjust to scientific change; scientific transformation is not expected to adjust to society's needs. Unemployment, destruction of meaning and value, and social alienation are some of the dire consequences of the social reductionism inherent in Western science and technology.

4. The fourth aspect of reductionism of Western science is ecological reductionism. This involves, at one level, forgetting the relationships in nature's complex web of life. At another level, it involves forgetting the

heavy resource demands that Western science and technology put on nature, both in terms of raw material and energy requirements as well as in terms of waste and pollution.

5. The fifth aspect of the reductionism is the bio-cultural reductionism inherent to Western-style scientific and technological development. Atomisation and fragmentation leads to a disregard for diversity and interdependence. It leads to the dominance of monocultures maintained through coercive, anti-ecological external control. Monocultures are intrinsically non-sustainable because they do not draw their sustenance from within themselves but from outside.

Each aspect of reductionism reinforces others. Jointly, they imply heavy human and ecological costs which are treated as merely 'externalities'. However, neither in the West nor in the non-West have science and technology been analysed in the context of human rights even though the human rights of five-sixth of humanity are denied because of the particular path and structure Western science and technology have taken. The following are dimensions of human rights violations intrinsic to the structure and ideology of Western science:

1. The appropriation and the consequent destruction of non-Western knowledge traditions is a violation of creativity as a human right.

2. The epistemological reductionism of the mechanistic worldview imposes unfair measures of scientificity on non-Western science, and leads to a violation of epistemological pluralism. It violates the right to culture, ethics and other ways of knowing as a human right.

3. The social consequences of Western science and technology include a violation of the right to livelihood as a human right.

4. The ecological consequences of Western science and technology involve a violation of rights to resources as a human right.

5. The pervasive spread of monocultures in society and ecosystems, and the consequent destruction of bio-cultural diversity is a violation of diversity as a human right.

The denial of the creativity of non-Western cultures

In 1792, Charles Grant drafted his *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain*. He argued that the Indians were ignorant of the natural sciences and that 'invention seems wholly torpid among them.'

William Ward, author of a four-volume *Account of the Writings, Religion and Manners of the Hindus,* declared categorically that the Hindus knew "nothing of anatomy, surgery, chemistry, pharmacy, and botany, that their geography was 'wholly false' and that they were very imperfectly acquainted" with mathematics.

The recent resurgence in the exploration of indigenous science and technology, inspired largely by Dharampal's work, *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century,* exhibits the racial prejudices underlying European writings on Indian science.

These commentaries could not be viewed as emerging from European ignorance of the richness of Indian traditions (which the Europeans had a habit of reducing to "Hindu"), since during the 18th century, Indian mathematics and medicine, science and technology were systematically reported in the learned societies in England. It had more to do with overlooking, than not knowing.

Thus, as Dharampal reports, in 1767, J.Z. Holwell, F.R.S., reported to the President and members of the College of Physicians in London on "the manner of inoculation for the smallpox practised by the Brahmins of Indostan, by considering the great benefit that may arise to mankind from a knowledge of this foreign method". Smallpox inoculation was clearly not a gift of the West to the world.

The practice of inoculation was unknown to the British medical and scientific world till it was found to be prevalent and highly successful in non-Westen societies. It was introduced to Britain by the wife of the British Ambassador in Turkey after 1720 when she successfully inoculated her children. However, after its value was recognised, and it was absorbed into Western medicine with modification (a vaccine from the cow replacing the previous "varcolos" matter taken from human agents), inoculation was in India banned by the British around 1802-3. The indigenous inoculation, however, continued to be practised until 1870, because, as the Superintendent-General of Vaccination in Uttar Pradesh in 1870 reported, the indigenous inoculation possessed "more protective power than is possessed by vaccination performed in a damp climate".

According to Dharampal, the frequent epidemics of smallpox in the 19th and 20th century can be traced largely to the fact that the indigenous practice of inoculation had been made most difficult by not only

withdrawing all support for it, but by also forcing it to be practised secretly and stealthily.

The criminalising of indigenous traditions, from which Western science has borrowed heavily, did not end with colonialism. It continues to this day. Intellectual piracy is now being protected through "Intellectual Property Rights" (IPRs).

The dominant paradigm of IPRs only protects innovation in the industrialised West. Centuries of innovation in the Third World are totally disvalued to give monopoly rights to plant material to transnational corporations who make minor modifications compared to the evolutionary change that nature and Third World farmers have made. IPRs thus ignore the contributions of generations of Third World farmers for over ten thousand years in the areas of conservation, breeding, domestication and development of animal genetic resources.

As Pat Mooney has indicated, "the argument that intellectual property is only recognisable when performed in laboratories with white lab coats is fundamentally a racist view of scientific development."

Two biases are inherent in this argument. One, that the labour of Third World farmers has no value, while the labour of Western scientists adds value. Secondly, that value is a measure only in the market. However, it is now fully recognised that "the total genetic changes achieved by farmers over the millennia were far greater than that achieved by the last hundred or two hundred years of more systematic science-based efforts." Plant scientists are not the sole producers of utility in seed.

The utility of farmers' seeds has high social and ecological value, even if it has no market value attached to it. The limits of the market system in assigning value can hardly be a reason for denying value to farmers' seeds. It points more to the deficiency of the logic of the market than the status of the seed or the farmers' intellect.

There is no epistemological justification for treating some germplasm as valueless and common and other germplasm as a valuable commodity and private property. This distinction is not based on the nature of the germplasm, but on the nature of political and economic power.

The patenting of products and processes derived from plants on the basis of indigenous knowledge has become a major issue of conflict in the IPRs domain. The patenting of neem is such an example.

For centuries the Western world ignored the neem tree and its properties: the practices of Indian peasants and doctors were not deemed worthy of attention by the majority of British, French and Portuguese colonists. However, in the last few years, growing opposition to chemical products in the West, in particular, to pesticides, has led to a sudden enthusiasm for the pharmaceutical properties of neem. Since 1985, over a dozen US patents have been taken out by US and Japanese firms on formulae for stable neem-based solutions and emulsions and even for a neem-based toothpaste. At least four of these are owned by W.R. Grace of the US, three by another US company, the Native Plant Institute, and two by the Japanese Terumo Corporation. Having garnered their patents and with the prospect of a licence from the EPA, Grace has set about manufacturing and commercialising their product by establishing a base in India. The company approached several Indian manufacturers with proposals to buy up their technology or to convince them to stop producing value-added products and instead supply the company with raw material. Grace is likely to be followed by other patent-holding companies. "Squeezing bucks out of the neem ought to be relatively easy," observes *Science* magazine.

W.R. Grace's justification for patents pivots on the claim that these modernised extraction processes constitute a genuine innovation: "Although traditional knowledge inspired the research and development that led to these patented compositions and processes, they were considered sufficiently novel and different from the original product of nature and the traditional method of use to be patentable."

In short, the processes are supposedly novel and an advance on Indian techniques. However, this novelty exists mainly in the context of Western ignorance. Over the 2000 years that neem based biopesticides and medicines have been used in India, many complex processes were developed to make them available for specific use, though the active ingredients were not given Latinized scientific names. Common knowledge and common use of neem was one of the primary reasons given by the Indian Central Insecticide Board for not registering neem products under the Insecticides Act, 1968. The Board argued that neem materials had been in extensive use in India for various purposes since time immemorial, without any known deleterious effects.

The US EPA, on the other hand, does not accept the validity of traditional knowledge and has imposed a full series of safety tests upon one of the products, Margosan-O.

We would like to make a distinction between two levels of knowledge.

1. Meta knowledge: knowledge of principles
2. Micro knowledge: knowledge involved in tinkering with technical processes.

Biodiversity has different properties which can be utilised for meeting human needs. In the case of neem, the knowledge that the tree has biopesticidal properties is meta knowledge in the public domain. Given this knowledge, various processes of technology can be harnessed for using the species for a variety of products. These are obvious, not novel.

Tinkering at the level of micro-knowledge as the basis of IPRs claims to the product is illegitimate on two grounds. It claims nature's creativity and the other cultures' creativity as its own. It leads, in the case of neem, to the false claim that the biopesticide property is created by the patentee. It treats petty tinkering as a source of creation, rather than specific species as a source of the creation of specific properties and characteristics, and communities as a source of the knowledge of the principle of utilisation.

However, the fact that tinkering does not create value is evident from the fact that the same tinkering applied to another species would not give a pesticide. The value of the product is independent of how it is processed but dependent on the source, in this case, the neem. The source of the knowledge regarding the principle that neem makes biopesticide is also not the inventor of epistemologically petty but technologically powerful tinkering but rather the society that gave rise to the knowledge.

IPRs are the new instruments for Western global domination, even when the knowledge that is given protection has its sources in non-Western cultures.

Bioprospecting is the name being increasingly used for the exploitation of indigenous biodiversity expertise. The World Resources Institute has defined biodiversity prospecting as the exploration of commercially valuable genetic and biochemical resources (WRI, 1993, Sanches and Jume, 1994). The metaphor for prospecting is borrowed from the prospecting for gold or oil. While biodiversity is fast becoming the "green

gold" and "green oil" for the pharmaceutical and the biotechnology industry, the metaphor for prospecting suggests that the expertise on the uses and value of biodiversity lies with the prospector, whereas it is actually held by local indigenous communities. Further, it suggests that prior to prospecting, the resource lies buried, unknown and unused, and without value. However, unlike gold or oil deposits, uses and value of biodiversity are known by the communities from where the knowledge is taken through bioprospecting contracts.

The metaphor of bioprospecting thus hides the prior use and knowledge and rights associated with it. It therefore makes alternative economic systems disappear, and projects the Western "prospector" as the only source for humanity's access to the medical and agricultural uses of biodiversity. With the disappearance of alternatives, monopoly rights in the form of intellectual property rights appear "natural".

When indigenous communities are asked to sell their knowledge to corporations, they are therefore being asked to sell their birthright to continued practice of their traditions in the future and to provide for themselves through their knowledge and their resources. This has already happened in the case of seeds in the industrialised world and in the case of plant based medicines derived from Third World knowledge. Of the 120 active compounds currently isolated from the higher plants and widely used in modern medicine, 75 per cent have uses that were known in traditional systems. Fewer than a dozen are synthesised by simple chemical modification; the rest are extracted directly from plants and then purified (Farnsworth, 1990, quoted in *Biodiversity Prospecting*, p.119). The use of traditional knowledge reportedly increases the efficiency of screening plants for medicinal purposes by more than 400 per cent.

Thus Eli Lilly paid Shaman Pharmaceuticals, a major bioprospecting company, US$14 billion for exclusive world-wide marketing rights to antifungal drugs drawn from the knowledge of native healers. The knowledge comes from indigenous communities, but the "exclusive world-wide marketing rights" belongs to a pharmaceutical multinational. The issue of ethics and justice is not resolved by the fact that Healing Forest Conservacy (Shaman's non-profit arm) will return a portion of its receipts to people and governments in the countries where Shaman works. (How much this portion is was never disclosed.) The injustice and immorality lies in the fact that a Western multinational is

able to claim global market monopoly on the basis of other people's indigenous knowledge, and eventually appropriate knowledge.

The freedom that transnational corporations are claiming through intellectual property rights protection in the GATT agreement on TRIPs is the freedom that European colonisers have claimed since 1492 when Columbus set precedence in treating the licence to conquer non-European peoples as a natural right of Europeans. The land titles issued by the Pope through European kings and queens were the first patents. Charters and patents issued to merchant adventurers were authorisations to "discover, find, search out and view such remote heathen and barbarous lands, countries and territories not actually possessed of any Christian prince or people." The colonisers' freedom was built on the slavery and subjugation of the people with original rights to the land. This violent takeover was rendered "natural" by defining the colonised people into nature, thus denying them their humanity and freedom.

The implication of a worldview that assumes the possession of an intellect to be limited to only one class of human beings is that they are entitled to claim all products of other people's intellectual labour as their private property, even when they have appropriated it from others —the Third World. Intellectual property rights and patents on life are the ultimate expression of the impulse to control all that is living and free.

Whether it is during colonisation or during recolonisation, the appropriation of knowledge from non-Western cultures, and the subsequent globalisation of that knowledge as a Western discovery is a violation of the human rights of donor societies because it robs them of their intellectual integrity and creativity.

The denial of non-reductionist ways of knowing

The rise of reductionist science has been associated with the subjugation of non-Western intellectual traditions as well as the non-reductionist paradigms in the West.

The knowledge and power nexus is inherent to the reductionist system because the mechanistic order, as a conceptual framework, was associated with a set of values based on power which was compatible with the needs of commercial capitalism. It generates inequalities and domination by the way knowledge is generated and structured, the

way it is legitimised, and by the way in which such knowledge transforms nature and society. The domination of the South by the North, of women by men, of nature by Western man are now identified as being rooted in the domination inherent to the worldview created by Western man over the last three centuries through which he could subjugate or exclude the rest of humanity. As Harding observes:

> We can now discern the effects of these cultural markings in the discrepancies between the methods of knowing and the interpretations of the world provided by the creators of modern Western culture and those characteristic of the rest of us. Western culture's favoured beliefs mirror in sometimes clear and sometimes distorting ways not of the world as it is or as we might want it to be, but the social projects of their historically identifiable creators.

Exclusion of other traditions of knowledge by reductionist science is threefold:

(i) ontological, in that other properties are just not taken note of; (ii) epistemological, in that other ways of perceiving and knowing are not recognised; and (iii) sociological, in that the non-specialist and non-expert is deprived of the right both to access to knowledge and to judging claims made on its behalf. All this is the stuff of politics, not science. Picking one group of people (the specialists), who adopt one way of knowing the physical world (the reductionist), to find one set of properties in nature (the mechanistic) is a political, not a scientific mode. Knowledge so obtained is presented as "the laws of nature", wholly "objective" and altogether universal. Feyerband is therefore right in saying: "The appearance of objectivity that is attached to some value judgements comes from the fact that a particular tradition is used but not recognised. Absence of the impression of subjectivity is not proof of objectivity, but an oversight."

This oversight is not insignificant. It has serious human rights implications. Hazardous medicines have been forced on people because safer and surer alternatives could not be justified in the reductionist logic. Sustainable agriculture has been destroyed world-wide because reductionist scientists could not deal with internal inputs and polycultures. And now, reductionist genetic engineering is emerging as

a new threat to diverse species and human health. The resistance of the biotechnology industry and Western governments to an international biosafety protocol and to the labelling of genetically engineered products are examples of human rights violation to protect the dominant science and technology system of the West as a prime instrument of global domination over people.

The denial of social needs and the right to work

Gandhi's critique of the industrialisation of India on the Western model was based on his perception of the poverty, dispossession and destruction of livelihoods which resulted from it.

"Why must India become industrial in the Western sense?," Gandhi has asked. "What is good for one nation situated in one condition is not necessarily good for another differently situated. One man's food is often another man's poison . . . . Mechanisation is good when hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil where there are more hands than required for the work as is the case in India."

The mechanisation of textile manufacture was the leading technological transformation of the first industrial revolution. By the time that technological innovation made full impact on the British textile industry in the early nineteenth century, England had gained full political control over resources and its markets in its colonies including India. India until then had been a leading producer and exporter of textiles in the world market. The industrialisation of England was based, in part, on the deindustrialisation of India. The development of England was based on India's underdevelopment. It is no coincidence that India's independence movement was based in large measure on seeking liberation from the control imposed upon resources and people of the Third World which was part of the process of Europe's industrialisation. Two symbols of India's independence struggle were the 'Champaran Satyagraha' and the "Charkha". The Champaran Satyagraha was a peaceful revolt against the forced cultivation of indigo as a dye for the British textile industry. The "Charkha" or spinning wheel was the technological alternative that created self-reliance instead of dependence, and generated livelihoods instead of destroying them.

While the rapid technological innovations in the British textile industry were made possible only through the prior control over the resources and the market, the stagnation and decay of this industry in

India was a result of the loss of political control first over the market and later over the raw material. The destruction of India's textile industry necessitated the destruction of the skills and autonomy of India's weavers. Often this destruction was extremely violent. For instance, the thumbs of the best Bengal weavers were cut off to eliminate market competition when Indian hand-woven textiles continued to do better than the British mill products. The impact of the violent manipulation and control of the English merchants over the Indian weavers started when the East India Company became a territorial power by defeating Nawab Sirajuddaula in the battle of Palassi in 1757. Before that, the Indian weavers were independent producers and had control over their produce. The East India company replaced the indigenous merchants with a 'body of paid servants receiving instructions from them with coercive authority over weavers that none had before. They had virtual monopoly of the market and had effectively exercised control over raw materials and began to extend this control over the weavers' tools. Under the company, weavers had virtually become wage workers on terms and conditions over which they had no control.'

The destruction of livelihoods was an important part of the first industrial revolution. Millions of handloom weavers in India were driven out of production.

The destruction of jobs and livelihoods is the most significant social crisis in our times. Its roots lie in the assumption that people must adjust to technology, technology does not need to adjust to people's needs.

In his new book, *The End of Work*, Jeremy Rifkin reports how human labour is being systematically eliminated within the production process. In the US, corporations are eliminating more than two million jobs annually. In the years ahead in the US alone, more than 90 million jobs out of a labour force of 124 million are potentially vulnerable to replacement by machines. Agriculture is the largest source of livelihood. Nearly half the human beings on the planet still farm the land. Technological changes in agriculture are threatening to destroy farmers everywhere.

Biotechnology is providing the West with a tool to displace primary commodities which the Third World supplies. Vanilla has been substituted, threatening 70,000 peasant farmers of Madagascar. Sugar has been substituted, threatening more than 10 million farmers in the Third World. Coconut as a source of lauric acid has been substituted by

genetically engineered rapeseed, threatening farmers in India and the Philippines.

The right to work is a fundamental human right. Planned and systematic destruction of livelihoods through the development of new technologies whose main objective is to substitute labour and people is probably the most pervasive but least noticed human rights violation of our times.

The denial of the ecological imperative

The global domination of Western science and technology have been projected as rising from the higher efficiency of these systems. However, at the level of resource use, Western science and technology have been highly inefficient. While indigenous agriculture can produce 1 cal. of food for 1/2 cal. of input, industrial agriculture uses 10 cals. for every cal. of food. Green Revolution crops require three to five times more water than indigenous varieties for the same quantity of production.

When the production of high yielding varieties of seeds is evaluated, not on productivity per unit land (tons/ha) but per unit volume of water input (ton/k lit), these miracle seeds of the Green Revolution are seen as two to three times less efficient in food production than, say, the millets. The results of evaluation of the technological efficiency of processes associated with economic development, when re-examined on a holistic basis and optimised against all resource inputs, would generally lead to the conclusion that "the much talked of efficiency of widely practiced high technology is not intrinsically true. They are, in fact, highly wasteful of materials and pollutive (that is, destructive to the productive potential of the environment)."

In the context of the market economy, the indicators of technological efficiency and productivity are totally blind to the difference between the satisfaction of basic needs and luxury requirements, or the difference between resources extracted by ecologically sensitive or insensitive technologies. They are also indifferent to the nature of the contribution of economic growth to diverse socio-economic categories. In the context of a highly non-uniform distribution of purchasing power and scanty knowledge of, or respect for ecological processes, economic growth depends on production and consumption of non-vital products. The expansion of the formal sector of the economy for the production of non-vital goods often leads to further diversion of vital natural

resources. For example, water-intensive production of flowers or fruit for the lucrative export market often results in water scarcity in low-rainfall areas.

In a world with a limited and shrinking resource base, and in the economic framework of a market economy, non-vital luxury needs are fulfilled at the cost of vital survival needs. The high-powered pull of the purchasing capacity of the rich of the world can draw out necessary resources in spite of resource scarcity and resulting conflicts.

The destruction of the planet's resources for the heavy resource demands of Western-style technological development goes hand in hand with the violation of ecological rights as a human right. Whether it is the anti-dam movements in Narmada or Tehri, or the movements against shrimp farming and deep sea fishing, or the Seed Satyagraha launched by Indian farmers, the tribals, peasants and fisherfolk fighting to protect the land and sea, the trees and seeds, are not just protecting nature. They perceive their struggles as human rights struggles to defend their livelihoods, life-styles, and life support systems. The protection of the environment and their human rights converge; they are not divergent. And the threat to the environment and their ecological rights comes from economically powerful forces using ecologically destructive Western science and technology on a global scale.

Science and technology have been central to the project of Western global domination. However, Western science and technology have so far escaped social and cultural scrutiny because they have been projected as universal, objective, value-free and inevitable. We are now beginning to see that they are not universal, they have merely been globalised. They are not objective but expressions of the subjectivity of the dominant Western enterprise, and they are definitely not inevitable because there are other ways of perceiving the world and shaping our tools to live in it.

It is time to pay more attention to these subjugated traditions of science and technology, for the sake of cultural diversity, and in order to be more respectful of nature and human rights.

The denial of bio-cultural diversity

Diversity is the nature of the natural and social world. The supreme arrogance of Western technological society is to deny the bio-cultural diversity of life, and to impose on diverse cultures and ecosystems

monocultures of plants and people. Thousands of varieties of crops evolved over millennia have been wiped out for the world-wide spread of Green Revolution varieties, maintained through heavy chemical and water inputs. Thousands of local cultures with their own meaning and organisation have been wiped out as the virus of monocultures spreads through the world, "breaking down the immunity of diverse cultures and species, creating ecological decay and disease, social disintegration and conflict".

The imposition of the monoculure is justified and promoted with the slogan of "new and improved"—whether it is the seeds of the Green Revolution or the seeds of consumerism, promoted through advertising on global media networks. The West has viewed diversity as a threat, and has tried to wipe it out to replace it with monocultures of its commodities. This is an intrinsic aspect of a worldview in which European man and his machines is the measure of being human and having human rights. The human right to be different, to protect integrity of cultures and ecosystems through diversity is what monocultures sacrifice. Throughout the world, as monocultures spread, the movements to protect bio-cultural diversity are also activated. The monoculture paradigm of the West can only see this as "tribalism", since in this paradigm, diverse faiths and beliefs should have given way to the technoculture of the modern West as the only legitimate global culture.

The emerging movements for the preservation and enrichment of bio-cultural diversity are human rights movements that recognise diversity as the essence of nature and of our humanness.

The Onslaught of the Western Media on the First World and the Third World

Jeremy Seabrook

That the global media conglomerates portray the South principally as pathology, and that they can demonise or deify individuals at will, has been well documented. What I would like to show is how they present an impression of kaleidoscopic diversity, promote a gaudy variety and chattering pluralism which have as their objective the promotion of incoherence. But it is not a random incoherence. It is a strange irony that the profusion of instruments of instruction and information should be deployed, not to enlighten, but to confuse. The media, electronic and written, are dedicated to two things: firstly, the keeping of secrets, the most notable of these being the true relationship between North and South, and the unreplicability of the Western way of wealth in the South, which the West tirelessly preaches, even though that wealth always has depended and continues to depend upon the expropriation and plunder of those it exhorts to follow it. Secondly, the media are devoted to the promotion of ignorance; a value-added, modernised ignorance, no doubt, but an ignorance which is now one of the major exports of the West, one which abridges dissent and admits of no alternatives.

In the classic version of imperialism, as practised by the British and French, the identity of the colonised was systematically crushed, denied and forbidden expression. Indigenous values, cultures and traditions were inferiorised and diminished.

The material trophies of empire now ornament the museums and national shrines of Britain and France—the jewels, artefacts, works of

craftsmanship, treasures and booty plundered from the occupied territories were the tangible emblems of their enrichment. But other lessons learned by the Western imperium in its piratical excursions across the world have proved to be even more enduring treasures. These lessons have been applied at home within the last 40 years or so; at the very moment of the apparent dissolution of the old empires.

In the West , we have seen a colonising of the supposed beneficiaries of empire, of the people of the West itself. Those who once formed a dangerous and threatening working class, those whose destiny once appeared to be an impoverishment without end. The pacification of the people of the West has been accomplished with the greatest thoroughness and application to detail; based largely upon a wealth extracted from the South. The ideological underpinning of this process has been given over to the licensed agents of instruction, the formers of opinion, the gatekeepers of the sayable, the police of admissible ideas. The role of the media has been crucial. It is essential to understand that the power of the global media has been well tried and tested in the Western heartlands; hence its exuberant and self-confident expansionism in the South once more.

In the countries of the West, all cultural identity has been pared away; not crushed and denied, as in the old empires, but reduced, interrupted, as it were, at source. Individuals have been cut down to their most irreducible characteristics —black or white, male or female,straight or gay, old or young. They are then offered "freedom of choice", which is more resonant because it means the freedom to reconstitute a cultural identity which has been erased, through buying in all the precious, given, cultural features that ought to have been our birthright, the gift of all earlier generations to their children. These transmissions have been halted, interrupted, and substituted by transmissions from satellite, cable, and antenna. The identities that might have been constituted through loving example and tradition, have been peeled away; the shared culture has been melted down, and the individual, alone, naked, stripped of all attributes, is invited to "choose" whatever she or he wants, in order to make whole the aching absences and voids, the spaces occupied by what has always been taken for granted in all other societies, in all cultures. In this sense, the more obvious violence of the assault upon the identity of people in the

former occupied territories has been avoided. Children have been the object of a vast effort of deculturation, erasure, obliteration of the cultural features of region, locality and function, the better to be invaded by a culture of merchandising. This has been the sublime mission of the media in the West, and now in the world. Our freedom to choose is founded on a profound anterior act of violence against the most vulnerable and uninformed, the children. Our children are routinely and systematically abused. No wonder child-abuse has become such an urgent preoccupation in the West.

Identity, mangled in this way, disaggregated and dispersed, must then be reassembled in a kind of do-it-yourself socialisation. Having been cut down to the level of the individual, robbed of collective, solidaristic, shared features, we stand before the array of commodities, adornments, experiences, artefacts, sensations and experiences of the global market-place; freedom indeed.

In the market, and its reflection in the media, we find, not only the displaced, objectified features of our own culture, but all the adornments of plunder that have been stolen from others all over the globe. Socialisation in our culture now means orgiastic merchandising. Children, to whom our most valuable and priceless bequest ought to be the rootedness of who they are—are invited to be what they want and who they choose: but what they want and choose must be mediated through the images, appearances, glittering surfaces of media-diffused markets. This is why so many parents have an obscure sense of their own de-skilling; and find that they have become mere enabling agents, increasingly agitated and powerless at the periphery of their children's progression through time, desperately seeking to provide them with what they want; and what they want exists in the overwhelming inputs,to use a term from the economic system which supplies them, to their sensory apparatus.

Since the abduction and murder of a toddler in Liverpool in February 1993, the shopping malls of Britain have been haunted by a poignant spectacle: parents attached to their children by reins, leashes, pieces of plastic tied to the wrist of parent and the wrist of the child. This physical tying is metaphor; for the truth is that as the infants are walked around the shopping spaces, they are actually in the presence of the commodities which will be the means whereby they will become separated from

their parents; their appetites and expanding needs are fed there; the needs to which the answers must be bought in, and which parents, in their love, will strive desperately to provide, are also a form of estrangement, a kind of abduction of the spirit, an alienation of the heart.

Alien values are implanted in the lives of the people, precisely through the children; alien, not merely in the sense of foreign or exotic, but alien to humanity. For the first time, a commerciogenic identity is formed; and the principal formers of that identity are the entertainment, video, music industries, the projection of shadows of superstars and heroes and idols, calculated to diminish and damage mere familiar flesh and blood of kinship and neighbourhood.

The colonised people of the West are now so deeply installed within its compulsions that they can no longer name it, or recognise it for what it is.

This colonialism, like any other, involves an abridgement of freedoms, an undermining of autonomy; but since these things cannot acknowledge themselves, all protest against them appears in deviant, symbolic and involuted ways—like crime, "mindless" violence and vandalism, addictions, breakdown of human associations, social and emotional dislocation and disease-formation. All these can readily be ascribed to defective or faulty individuals, and can avoid being properly located in those economic and social processes which are no longer, within the colonised universe, biddable, susceptible to human intervention. And the media sing their hymns of praise to the agencies of our unfreedoms.

This colonialism substitutes the distant, the remote, the centralised, for all that is local, domestic and familiar. In the towns and cities of the Western world, the people haunt the shopping centres, because only there can we discover the ways of answering need. Fewer and fewer basic needs are met locally. Almost nothing is now produced, created or made in the places where it is needed, but must be brought from afar, wafted in from elsewhere. And because these become constituents of young identities, the children see the elements of their being as coming from somewhere else. No wonder they say there is nothing to do in the places where they live. No wonder they say they are bored, uninterested; no wonder teenage runaways have become such a source of concern in the West. The young tell you, above all, that they want to get out, move on, be somewhere else, to escape, to leave home, to find themselves. To

find themselves. Of course. They need to follow the agent of their dispossession to its source.

In the reconstitution of the shattered identities of the people in the West, we acquire an increasingly oppressive clutter of experiences, sensations, goods and commodities, which weigh down the spirit and burden the individual with a disabling freight of inert, borrowed, exogenous insignia. All is external. It is not surprising if so many people complain they feel empty inside.

For we have been the site of battles that are not ours. We bear the scars of obliterations and uprootings that can be more or less healed only by trying to keep pace with the buying back of our expropriated substance. And that means through a kind of lease-back or renting: a buying-in of needs that can now be answered in only one way, through the market and the empowering access to money. This is truly, in spite of its sham and shadow diversity, a monoculture. Indeed, this also helps to explain the meaning of poverty in the West, despite the access of wealth in the last half century. Poor are those who, shaped for a dynamic and ever more penetrating buy-in culture, do not have the means even to begin to keep pace with the rate of what is being taken away from them. This is perhaps why a television set is now regarded as a basic necessity by even the poorest: it has become childminder, teacher, surrogate parent, sibling and companion. The industrialised world has for 200 years subjected its own people to a long and persistent development that has taken a single direction: the extirpation of all previous ways of responding to need, and their supersession by the market. The media, of course, merely serve this process. They do not create or initiate it. They are merely obeying orders.

It is no wonder that we invest the market with a veneration bordering on idolatry, and see it as a vehicle of salvation, arbiter of destiny and embodiment of morality. Not for the first time, human beings make a cult of that which is destroying them. While wealth accumulates around us, an iconography of luxury and ease bids us assent to the endless expropriations to which our daily experience is witness.

The development of this deculturation leads to a paradox, which is that the process that robs and removes from our grasp the capacity to do, make and answer need for ourselves and each other, itself becomes a culture in the end, a culture of perpetual wanting and of deregulated

desire. What is more, this now seeks to extend its imperium globally, in what it calls the world market, a single global economy. There is something admirably malleable, mobile, inventive, about this nimble colonialism, ripe for export once more; in the seductive guise of affluence which is now projected electronically across the world, and in which the depowering and dispossessing core is dissimulated in the exotic paraphernalia of consumption and enjoyment without end.

This is how the West is now ready for its present major assault on a backward, impoverished, helpless, powerless, dependent, corrupt Third World. First time around, it was all a little too crude. Now, it can call upon refinements of technique long practised at home. Expansion is on the agenda once more, this time into the almost limitless territories of the heart and spirit and imagination. What vistas beckon; what uncharted continents are waiting to be opened up by the explorers and adventurers, the merchant princes, the buccaneers. All earlier conquests look archaic and clumsy beside this newest mutation of domination. What is more, the objects of this new phase of empire-building appear to welcome it with open arms. Old freedom struggles melt away, old nationalisms are forgotten; ancient antagonisms are laid to rest. This is the triumphal march of Western wealth, the most powerful colonising agent of all, its promises and hopes of world-wide liberation; for it offers emancipations undreamed of in all previous partial, discredited and fallen ideologies of deliverance.

And we find ourselves in the presence of a strangely fascinating phenomenon: our human rights, the rights to our very humanity are being made forfeit, to the very processes that claim to enhance and enlarge them; and what is worse, we appear not even to notice it.

Freedom of Expression in the West: Myth and Reality

Edward S. Herman

Freedom of expression in the West is a reality at a personal level, but is subject to major structural constraints at the political level. The citizenry of the United States, for example,[1] is normally free to speak and send messages at odds with conventional and official opinion, without censorship or other state interference. An important qualification, even at the personal level, however, has resulted from periodic "red scares"and alleged "national security" threats, which have provided the basis for secret police surveillance and harassment, and politically based job purges and other forms of punishment for dissident thought. One book on the Truman-McCarthy era Red Scare and Purges (1949-55) was entitled *The Great Fear*, and there is little doubt that loyalty checks, blacklists, and fear of accusations and job losses had a durable chilling effect on freedom of expression in that era and others as well.[2]

Structural limits to free expression

A deeper and more formidable limit on free expression in the West arises from the nature and power of the dominant mainstream media and the forces that shape and constrain their messages.

The Western mass media are thoroughly integrated into the main institutional structures of the West, with profound connections to the dominant transnational corporations (TNCs) and governments. They themselves are large firms, sometimes with global outreach, and they are responsible to their owners as profit-making organizations. Some of them are owned by other (non-media) corporations. Most notably in the United States, General Electric Company, a huge TNC in the weapons and nuclear reactor businesses, owns NBC, a major TV network; and Westinghouse, another large TNC in the weapons-nuclear reactor business, owns sizeable radio and cable TV network. All the major media depend on corporate advertising as their primary revenue source, and

to satisfy these funders they must provide a congenial environment for advertising.[3]

The dominant media also have close relations to government, which licenses TV stations, protects and advances media interests abroad, and constitutes a major information source to the media. In many ways, the media and government support and depend on one another in a symbiotic relationship, and there is a revolving door of personnel between government and leading media firms.

The result is that both news and entertainment messages which support dominant TNC and governmental interests flow through the media easily. Messages of dissent come from weaker parties, with less access, and their messages may anger the powerful, who have the knowledge and resources to challenge these hostile claims and threaten media that give them credence. Thus, dissident messages often make it only into publications that reach small numbers. The government, which reaches the masses through the dominant corporate media, can, with media co-operation, even organize propaganda campaigns to manufacture consent to favoured policies. The refutation of this propaganda, and the presentation of other oppositional messages, is often confined to a marginalized media that reaches at best 2% of the population.

This system works extremely well in its service to the powerful. It gives the appearance of naturalness and freedom, with many media firms in action. It is hard to detect that they all operate on the same restricted premises and depend heavily on the same powerful sources with an axe to grind. It is also not obvious that the dominant media are blacking out major areas of debate and inconvenient facts. The system also works well in offering mass audiences attractive fare. Again, it is not easy to see that some attractive fare that doesn't fit the TNC-government political agenda is excluded, despite possible audience interest and salience to understanding. Finally, defenders of the system can always point to the dissident media, showing that dissent is allowed; its marginalized character is explained by free consumers' choice in a free market, not by advertiser power in a system where large size and advertiser support determine viability.

The ultimate result of the Western system of concentrated, commercial media is a systematic tendency toward media bias serviceable to a Western governing class interest. There is also a racist and nationalistic

bias that serves well this class interest. These biases can be seen in U.S. and other Western media coverage of a variety of controversial topics, including those bearing on human rights.

Class bias

The class bias of the mainstream U.S. media was clearly exhibited in their coverage of the recent ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). U.S. polls showed that a great majority of the populace opposed NAFTA, as did organised labour; but the TNCs and business lobbies favored it. Displaying his subservience to corporate interests, and ignoring the demands of his own political party and voting constituency, President Clinton pushed hard for NAFTA, engaging in blatant vote buying to get enough congressional votes for passage. It was reported in the press that the Mexican government spent at least $30 million in the United States to win passage of NAFTA, and businesses spent large sums as well. The mainstream media supported NAFTA almost without exception, and news and opinion coverage was extremely biased in its favor. Both the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* editorialised indignantly about labour's attempt to influence the outcome of the NAFTA vote, both even listing labour's political contributions. In short, the bias was so great as to even question labour's right to participate in the political process in cases where the corporate community took a strong stand.

This same class bias helps explain the steady media assault on Clinton, and earlier, President Jimmy Carter. These Democratic presidents, despite their desperate efforts to convince the business community of their fundamentally pro-business orientation,[4] were not trusted by businesses, as their voting constituency was mainly ordinary citizens who favour populist policies of redistribution downward, a welfare state, and controls over business. Hence, businesses worry about deficits during periods of Democratic rule, as these may be serving ordinary citizens, not themselves—and they are pleased with scandals that weaken the power of Democrats to govern effectively. By contrast, Republican Presidents like Ronald Reagan serve the business community and wealthy minority without stint. It is hardly a coincidence, therefore, that the media have been very deficit conscious and prone to find scandals under Clinton—and before him, Carter—while Reagan was able to

more than double the national debt during his term in office, and was interfered with little by scandal-mongering despite record-breaking abuses of government power. The media were aggressive under Carter and Clinton, but exceedingly passive with Reagan in office.

Racial bias

The United States is a deeply divided society, and racial prejudice affects both domestic politics, foreign policy, and media performance. Even today, long discredited theories of black inferiority have reappeared and are given great publicity and credence, because they fit traditional racist attitudes and the demands of an elite that is unwilling to spend large resources to rectify great historic crimes and wrongs.

These attitudes have long fed into U.S. foreign policy, especially those involving Third World poor and coloured peoples. Such people are more easily conquered and killed if they can be regarded as inferior, their proper role seen as servants of the West. It was convenient to argue that people in, say Haiti or Nicaragua, were too primitive for democratic rule, which helped rationalize the many decades of U.S. support for rulers who served U.S. interests, while jointly exploiting and abusing their own citizenry.

It is also easy to kill mercilessly if the victims are savages and subhuman. In Vietnam, we killed "mere gooks," who U.S. officials said don't feel pain like Westerners. One of the notable features of U.S. wars in Indo-China and the Persian Gulf was the use of advanced technology that would reduce <u>our</u> casualties, while possibly increasing those of Indo-Chinese and Gulf civilians. Vietnamese and Iraqi casualties were implicitly but quite clearly given zero weight, valuations that were clearly reflected in the media. It is interesting, however, that this racist dehumanization is never seen to be in contradiction with the allegedly controlling Judeo-Christian ethic and higher morality of the West. "Love thy neighbour" and Christian mercy need not extend to foreign enemies, and especially those considered subhuman. It is likely that Western support of IMF-World Bank "structural adjustment policies" in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World, that immiserate millions of poor people, also rest at least in part on the same racist underpinning: a large fraction of the victims are coloured people who don't feel things as intensely as whites.

Nationalism

The U.S. mainstream media work with a profound but mainly unconscious patriotic bias that badly compromises their ability to transmit news about foreign affairs. In the case of each U.S. imperial venture, the media operate with a set of patriotic premises: that their government tells the truth, has benevolent aims, and takes actions that are invariably justified by "national security" threats along with its desire to do good. There is also a remarkable double standard in place: nobody but the pitiful giant, the United States, has a national security problem; and international law applies only to others, not to the United States itself.

In the case of the U.S. attacks on Nicaragua in the 1980s, the media did not laugh at the claim that that tiny country posed a threat to the United States, or that U.S. officials were deeply concerned about the lack of democracy in Nicaragua. The fact that the United States had supported Somoza for 45 years, and that its leadership in the 1980s was entirely happy with dictatorships in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Indonesia, and strove for closer relations with military governments in Argentina and Guatemala, did not suggest any questions to the media, given their built-in double standard. In the case of the U.S. invasion of Panama in 1989, the media were uninterested in the fact that its leader Manuel Noriega had been on the U.S. payroll a few years back, or that the invasion was a violation of the UN and OAS charters. During the Persian Gulf war the U.S. media served as a perfect public relations arm of the Bush administration as it fended off diplomatic solutions, covered up its prior appeasement of Saddam Hussein, and manipulated consent at home and in the UN for a completely one-sided and brutal massacre.[5]

One of the most dramatic illustrations of the nationalist bias of the U.S. media was their coverage of the U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO during the Reagan era (in 1984-85).[6] The primary frame of reference for the media was the State Department's charges against UNESCO—politicisation, mismanagement, and a threat to the free press—which though vague and ideologically charged, the media took as valid without the slightest independent investigation. Their perceived role was merely to elaborate and illustrate these truths. Real history—which would show early U.S. control over UNESCO and its politicisation for Cold War ends—was not allowed to surface during the withdrawal period.

Alternative ways of looking at the issues, such as the claim that this was one facet of a Reaganite move to unilateralism, and that the New World Information Order was a quest for cultural autonomy and that its identification with "licensing of journalists" was a caricature, were entirely ignored.

Orwellian capability of Western media

The power of the Western media to suppress, rewrite history, demonize and dehumanize enemies, and presume benevolent intentions and just causes on the part of their leaders, allows them to perform an Orwellian miracle: whatever the West does is justifiable, although occasional errors of tactical judgment (non-intentional) may occur. If the United States destroys Indochina, it was to "protect South Vietnam" (a completely artificial creation of the United States), or to "save it" from Communism or aggression. For the case of Indochina, the U.S. even developed the concept of "internal aggression," which allowed it to go 10,000 miles away to fight a people aggressing against themselves!

In the years from 1954-90, the United States helped construct a continent-wide system of neo-Nazi NSSs in Latin America, led commonly by former trainees at U.S. schools in Panama, Washington, D.C., and Fort Benning, Georgia. Systematic torture and disappearances engineered by "death squads" affiliated with security forces reached new heights.[7] Official U.S. documents show that these developments were carefully designed and pushed by U.S. officials to serve U.S. interests, seen as threatened by "nationalists" excessively concerned to raise the incomes of the majority, and insufficiently oriented to TNC and U.S. strategic objectives. The NSSs took care of these problems nicely, by killing dissident leaders, atomizing the masses, and opening the door to foreign investment.

How did the mainstream media put a good face on these developments? Mainly by eye aversion. The killings, torture and demobilization of the masses, and the Catholic Church's protest with "The Cry of the People," were treated in a very low key. U.S. involvement in state terrorism in the U.S. backyard was minimized. The internal documents openly describing U.S. planned use of the Latin American military to counter populism have never been cited in the leading U.S. media, and it was accepted by the media that the United States very much regretted

the "excesses" of their trainees—who they consistently supported—who had been trained in "democracy"! As noted, the media swallowed the idea that the Reagan administration was pursuing democracy in Nicaragua in its attacks on the Sandinista government, despite overwhelming evidence that it was U.S. trainees with U.S. support who had filled Latin America with military dictatorships from 1954 onwards. Finally, much attention was given to the Communist menace as explaining and implicitly justifying these ugly developments. The Cold War was an invaluable cover for fighting populism and democracy, until 1990, when new bases of intervention became urgently needed.[8]

The power of Orwellian self-deception reached its limit in the media's treatment of U.S. intervention in Vietnam, where, after a lengthy period of supporting French recolonization (1946-54), the U.S. then fought against self-determination for two more decades. When its puppet regime in the South collapsed, the US virtually destroyed the Indochinese peninsula to avoid "losing" its hold on that distant Third World country. The U.S. mainstream media from beginning to end looked upon the U.S. effort as noble and virtuous, another struggle for democracy and against terrorism and aggression. The notion that the U.S. had no business trying to impose its own chosen rulers in that distant country, and was an aggressor fighting against self-determination, never struck the patriotic media.[9] After the U.S. withdrawal in 1975, it enforced an 18-year international boycott of its victim, although it should have been paying enormous reparations for unprovoked aggression. From 1969 U.S. officials focused on allegedly missing U.S. POWs, first to prolong the war, and later to justify punishing the war's true victims.[10] The U.S. mainstream media never challenged this policy of vindictive punishment, or the idea that the U.S. was the victim of the Vietnam war who had to "forgive" Vietnam.

Western interests and media versus human rights

The Western media pretend to objectivity, but their sources, ideological biases, commercial affiliations, and the preconceptions of their main (home) audiences make this a huge fallacy. They serve dominant Western power interests. This has a profound effect on their treatment of human rights.

A primary bias is in their very definition of human rights. For the Western elites, human rights mean personal and political rights, not economic rights. But in most of the Third World, the basic human needs of food, shelter, medical care, and employment are inadequately met and constitute the first and most urgent demand of the majority. Arguably, the serving of these needs is a precondition to the meaningfulness of other rights.[11] However, Western elites, their own economic needs over-supplied, and striving to contain wage increases and government benefits to the world's masses, strenuously oppose definitions of human rights that include the meeting of basic economic needs.

This conflict of interest is dramatically illustrated in IMF lending policy, which, reflecting the elite Western world view, commonly requires a reduction in food, housing and medical subsidies, along with unemployment generating macroeconomic policies. These terms serve the interests of foreign investors and some local capitalists, even as they threaten the basic needs of the majority and erode economic and social democracy. This conflicting view of appropriate policy—and definition of human rights—is becoming more acute in a New World Order of greater TNC power and pressures on governments to further reduce attention to ordinary citizens in favor of improving "competitiveness."

But even as regards the human rights recognized in the West, a remarkable double standard is maintained, as described earlier. State terror in enemy states is given great and indignant attention—these involve what Professor Noam Chomsky and I have called "worthy victims."[12] State terror by governments serving Western interests, as in Guatemala, Turkey, and Indonesia, is discussed rarely and without indignation; the victims in these cases are "unworthy." Terror is identified and attended to according to political interest. Elections that serve to legitimate proper Western servants are hailed as valid, those in enemy states are derided as a sham, irrespective of fact.

In short, if we add the biased definitions of human rights to the selective attention to abuses, the Western media, while sometimes dealing with real problems, have badly compromised human rights values and allowed human rights to be used as a tool of Western interests.

It is urgently important that the Third World recognize these obvious and elementary facts and try to maintain and encourage an indigenous media and Third World press networks that can reflect local and Third

World interests. This is in fact essential to the preservation of any kind of national and cultural independence and integrity.

Endnotes

1. I will speak here mainly of the United States, the most powerful of the Western states, with greatest effect on the Third World, although many of my generalizations hold more broadly for other Western states.

2. See David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenshower*, Random House, 1978; Donna Demac, *Liberty Denied: The Current Rise of Censorship in America*, Rutgers University Press, 1990; Frank Donner, *The Age of Surveillance*, Vintage Books, 1981.

3. See especially, Erik Barnouw, *The Sponsor*, Oxford University Press, 1978; Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Pantheon, 1988, chap. 1.

4. This was well illustrated by Clinton's total commitment to Nafta, a TNC project opposed by a large majority of his voting constuency.

5. See Douglas Kellner, *The Persian Gulf TV War*, Westview Press, 1992, and Hamid Mowlana *et al*, eds., *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf—A Global Perspective*, Westview Press, 1992.

6. For a full account, see William Preston, Edward Herman and Herbert Schiller, *Hope and Folly: The United States and UNESCO 1945-1985*, University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

7. See Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism*, South End Press, 1979, and Penny Lernoux, *Cry of the People*, Doubleday, 1980.

8. For an excellent description of the Cold War as a cover for Great Power actions dictated by other considerations, see Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy*, Verso, 1991, and his *World Orders Old and New*, Columbia University Press, 1994.

9. For a discussion, see Herman and Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*, *op cit* chap. 5.

10. For an excellent account, see H. Bruce Franklin, *M.I.A. or Mythmaking in America*, Lawrence Hill, 1992.

11. For a discussion of this point see Edward Herman, "The United States Versus Human Rights in the Third World," *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, Spring 1991, pp. 98-103.

12. Chapter 2 of the book *Manufacturing Consent* is entitled "Worthy and Unworthy Victims." It gives detailed evidence of the double standard described in the text here.

Racism in the West and its Impact on Human Rights

David G. Du Bois

"Ever have men striven to conceive of their victims as different from the victors, endlessly different, in soul and blood, strength and cunning, race and lineage. It has been left, however, to Europe . . . to discover the eternal, world-wide work of meanness—color" W.E. B. Du Bois (in 1920)

Surely committed democrats around the world must repeatedly ask themselves how it is that the people, that is the electorate, in the loudly trumpeted democracies of North America, Great Britain and Europe stand by passively silent, and thus approving, as their leaders tolerate, participate in and themselves initiate the most blatant violations of the human rights of the peoples of Central and South America and the Caribbean—in Nicaragua, in El Salvador, in Chile, in Cuba, in Haiti, in Grenada; of the Middle East and North Africa —in Iraq, in Palestine, in Lebanon, in Libya; of East Asia—in Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea and the Philippines; in the horn of Africa and throughout Black Africa.

The answer is found, first, in an aggressively promoted, arrogant US provincialism which, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the demise of the alleged threat of Communism, has been increasingly fed by an Iran-centred, anti-Islamic religious fervour. And secondly, in the belief, deliberately and skilfully propagated, with growing intensity since the Vietnam war, that peoples of colour, and most assuredly Africans, peoples of African descent and Arabs, are inherently, irretrievably inferior in intellect, in ability and in morality to Europeans and peoples of European descent.

Therefore, it is maintained, in this world of evil men and evil ideologies, Europeans and peoples of European descent have a duty, indeed, a Christian obligation to protect peoples of colour, both from themselves and from the unscrupulous; the belief that the best of all possible worlds of the future is a world of unchallenged European hegemony.

Nearly a century ago W.E.B. Du Bois, declared, "The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races, in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea." Midway through that century, in 1953, he declared, "I still think today as yesterday that the color line is a great problem of this century. But today I see more clearly than yesterday that at the back of the problem of race and color, lies a greater problem which both obscures and implements it; and that is the fact that so many civilised persons are willing to live in comfort even if the price of this is poverty, ignorance and disease of the majority of their fellowmen; that to maintain this privilege men have waged war until today war tends to become universal and continuous, *and the excuse for this war continues largely to be color and race.*" (my emphasis).

Until the 1960s, evidence of the truth of these declarations was most obvious in the central role "the color line" played and continues to play in the making of America. However, the Black-led civil rights rebellion that swept the US while political independence was being won by one Black African nation after another and the US military was compelled to quit Vietnam, convinced the traumatised US/European centres of power of the need to institutionalise the colour line globally as an assist in preserving that power elite's dominant position. That is, to use skin colour as an explanation for the depressed conditions of peoples and nations and their inability to change those conditions.

To accomplish this, however, it was necessary to remove the popular US voices of resistance to open racist rule. Thus, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963; the assassination of Malcolm X, the fiery convert to Islam, in 1965, with the assassinations in 1968 of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Presidential candidate Robert Kennedy following in rapid succession.

A global crusade has been launched by powerful forces within the West's industrial/military complex. The objective of this crusade is to relegate that developing world, made up predominantly of peoples of colour, to a position of total and permanent dependency. As an instrument to rally Europeans and peoples of European descent—white people—and those beholden to them, behind this global crusade, the alleged inherent superiority of peoples of European origin and the alleged inherent inferiority of Africans and peoples of colour globally is being

deliberately, purposefully and aggressively asserted. The most powerful tool used to promote this crusade in the West is the media, and most particularly, television. Long before television was thought of Lao Tse counselled, "He who controls the image controls the mind." Keeping the people uninformed and misinformed has been developed into a fine art in the West.

Examine the news and information that the Americans, and increasingly Europeans, are provided about the peoples of five-sixths of the world. When that five-sixths is covered at all, it is either to report and pontificate on a catastrophe, man-made or natural; a conflict, political, civil or regional; or the bizarre, the exotic, the "picturesque." In the same way Africans-Americans and Latinos are portrayed, almost exclusively on prime time US television and by the media generally, as dope addicts, criminals, happy-go-lucky clowns or mindless super athletes; Third World leaders and peoples, particularly Africans and Arabs, are almost exclusively portrayed, when portrayed at all, as incompetent, corrupt, destitute, diseased and violence-prone.

Keep mainstream America and Europe convinced that this TV/media image of black and coloured peoples is the reality, and several objectives are achieved. Most important, the alleged superiority of whites or Europeans is proven; an elitist division within and between the communities of peoples of colour is encouraged; the sting of the charge of White racism is greatly minimised, and the responsibility for final resolution of "the race problem" is placed on the victims.

The pursuit of this crusade is dramatically demonstrated in the recent reappearance in the US of the long since repudiated Nazi theories of racial inferiority of Black people, providing the intellectual justification for making Black Americans the scapegoats for the country's moral, spiritual and social deterioration. Three newly published, allegedly scientific studies—*The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*; *Race, Evolution And Behavior: A Life History Perspective*, and *The Decline of Intelligence in America: A Strategy for National Renewal* —were featured in the *Sunday New York Times Book Review* as recently as October 16, 1994, and are currently being reported on and discussed repeatedly on prime time television and in major periodicals throughout the West.

The science reporter for *The New York Times*, in his review, writes of the authors of the three studies, "They believe that America is rapidly

evolving a huge underclass, an intellectually deprived population of men and women whose cognitive abilities will never match the future needs of most employers and for whom American society seems to have less use each year."*The New York Times* continues, "The prisoners of this new underclass, the authors fear, may be permanently doomed by their intellectual shortcomings to welfare dependency, poverty, crime and lives shorn of any hope of realising the American dream." The authors of *The Bell Curve*, actually propose the creation of what they call a "custodial state"—"a high-tech and more lavish version of the Indian reservation" for the permanent occupancy of this underclass. The three authors assert repeatedly throughout their studies that the vast majority of this underclass is Black.

Repeatedly, in the popular media and culture of America, the poverty, crime, corruption and moral depravity of this Black underclass have been cleverly and subtly placed side by side with Third World poverty, crime, corruption, moral depravity and underdevelopment. So effective has this effort been that today in the US, Africa has become synonymous with failure. Americans *en masse* have given up any hope of its salvation, and *The New York Times* can feature an article in its *Sunday Magazine* entitled and asserting, "Colonialism's Back, and Not a Moment Too Soon". The very term "Third World" is rejected by many of the victimised community of peoples of colour in the US.

And yet, as evidence mounts of Black Africa's global marginalisation despite the victories of African political independence during the 1960s, as US dollarism and domination throughout Latin America steadily diminishes, and, as Asia's economic resurgence more and more challenges the West, there is a growing determination among African Americans and other Americans of Third World origin and identity, particularly among the young, to challenge head-on expressions and manifestations of White racism and European superiority. This is the most important and potentially the most explosive reality confronting the US today. And, as happened in the 1960s, this could ignite, initially among its Third World population, youthful popular resistance throughout Europe.

In response, however, neo-fascist, White supremacist groups in both the US and Europe are today proliferating, boldly declaring that their *raison d'être* is the salvation of the "white race" from the global danger

of being overwhelmed and engulfed by peoples of colour. This is the persistent, subterranean theme of their recruitment literature and their rhetoric. This is the underlying justification for their racism and their increasing use of violence. This provides the excuse and the explanation to the electorates of Europe and North America for the violations of the most basic human rights of non-Europeans around the globe.

In the US, illegal immigration from Mexico, the Caribbean and South America and an alleged high fertility rate among African-American and Latino girls and women are reasons given for White alarm. In Europe, it is the alleged flood of "coloureds" from the Commonwealth into Britain; the Francophone and Muslim Africans into France; Arabs, Africans, Muslim Turks and Asians into Germany, and an assortment of Third World workers into Italy, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

An insidious, racist, media-fired campaign is underway throughout Europe today to associate non-citizen, mostly black and Third World immigrant workers, asylum-seekers, refugees and travellers with illegality, crime, political extremism and terrorism. Structures are secretly being set in place by European Interior Ministers, police chiefs and security personnel, jointly and individually, to block entrance into fortress Europe and to develop mechanisms of internal control to police those 17 million people settled in Europe but without citizens' rights.

These mechanisms are twofold. First, through the threat of expulsion or extradition, and second, internally, through state and bureaucratic surveillance and an aggressive form of "suspect" policing. Under recently enacted legislation, that bastion of European racist practice and arrogance in the South, Australia, joins the crusade by forcibly expelling Vietnamese refugees in chains, without having conducted investigations to determine their refugee status, in violation of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The Institute of Race Relations in London reports, "the pan-European state and the individual European states act without regard to any concept of civil liberties, and in the process undermine such conventions and guarantees of human rights as do exist."

I believe that in the Gulf War, where the human rights of the people of the entire Gulf region were openly violated, the world witnessed a classic demonstration of the horrific US foreign policy consequences of White racism. The widespread demonization and dehumanising of

Saddam Hussein by US leaders, government spokespersons, military analysts, media pundits and editorial cartoonists fed the Hollywood-created, racist image of the desert Arab of evil deed and intent, and contributed to the wide, popular US support for that savage military action and the continuing suffering of the Iraqi people.

The removal of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries as the adversarial justification for an aggressive, militarily dictated foreign policy has compelled the leadership in the West to invent a new enemy, a new excuse. Only thus can that leadership justify to its electorate retaining obscenely bloated military budgets. The Rand Corporation think-tank "expert", Francis Fukuyama, former policy planner at the US State Department and advocate of the "end of history" theory, recently declared that with the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union, "the world will henceforth be divided along different lines, with the Third World and Islamic world defining the main axis of conflict."

Powerful forces in the West are engaged in a holy crusade to make the world believe that the new enemy is an array of Third World dictators, undemocratic Third World regimes and widespread Third World political and religious instability, corruption, underdevelopment and incompetence, in alliance with militant Islam, whose adherents are overwhelmingly Third World peoples of colour.

It is thus that White racism, the assertion that coloured peoples are inherently inferior, is being deliberately and skilfully used in the West to undermine the ability and the desire of Americans and Europeans to include peoples of colour as fully entitled members of the human family and thus deserving of the same human dignity, the same social justice and the same human rights advocated for themselves. It is thus that the peoples of North America, and to a somewhat lesser extent the peoples of Europe, remain silent and unmoved by repeated violations of the human rights of five-sixths of humanity, endangering and undermining their ability to guarantee and defend their own human rights.

To the peoples of Africa, the most ravaged by racism, Dr. Du Bois counselled in his autobiography, *A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century*, published after his death, "But, above all—Africa, Mother of Men. Your nearest friends and neighbors are the colored people of China and India, the rest of Asia, the Middle East and

the Sea isles, once close bound to the heart of Africa and now long severed by the greed of Europe. Your bond is not mere color of skin, but the deeper experience of wage slavery and contempt."

In 1949, in New York City's Madison Square Garden Dr. Du Bois told a rally of the International Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, "I tell you, people of America, the dark world is on the move! It wants and will have Freedom, Autonomy and Equality. It will not be diverted in these fundamental rights by dialectical splitting of political hairs . . . Whites may, if they will, arm themselves for suicide. But the vast majority of the world's peoples will march on over them to freedom."

Human Rights Between Rwanda and Repatriations: Global Power and the Racial Experience

Ali A. Mazrui

This paper is partly about dualism in the human condition. It is an echo of the Lincolnian principle that no nation can long endure half-slave, half free.[1] Perhaps no nation can long endure half oppressed, half privileged either.

Rwanda is a metaphor for dualism in the human condition. And the fluctuating fortunes of Hutus and Tutsis (Rwanda's two ethnic groups) tell a story which is much bigger than themselves.

The United States is basically a plural society. But racially the United States has continued to be, ultimately, a dual society—with the sharpest polarization being between Whites and Blacks. This is polarization in colour, incomes, life-styles, power, and attitudes towards each other.[2] Human rights and social justice are often at the core.

There are at least two ways of treating the theme "Between Rwanda and Reparations". One approach is the literal one of telling the Rwandan story and the reparations story and see what the two have in common.

The other approach is to treat the Rwandan tragedy as a metaphor for the reparations case. The entire calamity between the Hutus and the Tutsis in conflict in post-colonial Rwanda becomes a particularly dramatic illustration of what is wrong with the Black world, particularly in the post-colonial independent era of Africa.[3]

This paper will fluctuate between those two approaches—the literal and the metaphorical. But first let us look at the history of my involvement with the issue of reparation.

In June 1992, I and eleven others were officially empanelled ("sworn in") as members of a Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) created by the

Organization of African Unity (OAU) to explore the modalities and strategies of an African campaign for restitution, similar to the compensation paid by the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Israel and to survivors of the Nazi Holocaust.[4]

The ceremony which empanelled us took place in Dakar, Senegal, before the Heads of State of Africa at the O.A.U. summit meeting. In the Chair was President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria. After the "swearing in" our Group of Eminent Persons (GEP) held its first meeting also in Dakar. Our first visitor (who provided us with a photo opportunity) was veteran liberation fighter, Nelson Mandela from South Africa. Our first witness before our committee was veteran civil rights fighter, Jesse Jackson from the United States. As a reparations panel, our work in Dakar in June 1992 was mainly symbolic and supportive. But we did choose the main officers of our own committee. We elected as our chairman Chief Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola, the Nigerian publishing giant and crusader for African reparations. We elected as co-chairman Professor Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, former Director-General of UNESCO. And we elected Ambassador Dudley J. Thompson, Jamaica's Commissioner to Nigeria, as the rapporteur-general of the GEP.

It was not until the GEP's second official meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, in September 1992 that we began to address more substantive issues of reparation for Africa's enslavement and colonization. We met with the Nigerian Head of State again, and he contributed $500,000 to our preliminary budget as a committee. We had only just begun our work. Who was to pay reparations? Who was to be the beneficiary? In what form should it be paid—money, service, debt-forgiveness, or others?

Did the crusade stand a real chance of success? There were other basic questions underlying the wider debate on reparations.[5] Was the denial of reparations for so long itself a continuing violation of human rights?[6]

In the context of this paper, Rwanda continues to be partly a metaphor for the wider damage of history. Rwanda is a society polarized between Hutus and Tutsis. The reparations crusade is partly based on a vision of the world ultimately polarized between Blacks and Whites.

Rwanda is a society where the majority of Hutus once overthrew the privileged minority Tutsis—and then discovered in the 1990s that the Tutsis were once again in control.

Africa as a whole is a continent where the majority Blacks thought they had overthrown the minority White control—and are discovering in the 1990s that the Whites have remained in control all along.

The conquering Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 have ethnic compatriots among the privileged elites of Burundi and Uganda. The privileged Whites in Africa have ethnic compatriots in the Western world as a whole.

But these comparisons between Hutu/Tutsi and Black/White relations have their limits. There may be a dual society in Rwanda, but there is a global apartheid on planet earth.[7] At its most polarized, the global apartheid is between an increasingly powerful White world, on the one hand, and a deeply humiliated Black world, on the other.[8]

There may be subsidiary themes. Rwanda is a piece of the Black world deeply divided by ethnicity. A place like Haiti, on the other hand, is a piece of the Black world, deeply divided by class.

And yet both of these societies are basically casualties of capitalism rather than converts to capitalism. Indeed, much of the Black world consists of casualties of capitalism (like Haitians) rather than converts to capitalism (like Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore). Are those further grounds for paying reparations to the Black world? The emergence of global apartheid is an additional debating arena for reparations.

Dual Rwanda torn asunder

When I was being interviewed for the Albert Schweitzer Chair at Binghamton University in New York State in 1989, I addressed a political science seminar of fellow professors on the subject of "The Dual Society". By that I meant a society in which only two ethnic groups constituted the overwhelming majority of the population.[9] One of my examples in the presentation was indeed Rwanda where the majority Hutus and the minority Tutsis constituted over 90% of the population.

Countries like Kenya, India and the United States are ethnically plural societies, with many different groups, and diverse possibilities of coalitions and political alliances. But in a dual society the danger of polarization is great if the two ethnic groups do not get along well together. There are no intermediate groups to hold the balance of power, no easy coalitions or political marriages of convenience with third groups. The tragedy of Rwanda is that it was reduced to such a stark dualism between the Hutus and the Tutsis.

Czechoslovakia was a dual society consisting of Czechs and Slovaks. In 1993, the country broke into two separate republics—Czech and Slovak. Unfortunately, Rwanda does not lend itself to such a territorial partition. The Hutus and Tutsis do not inhabit separate regions of the country, but are territorially intermingled almost from village to village. If they cannot get on, they cannot say "It's time to part"—like the Czechs and Slovaks did peacefully.[10] For the Hutus and Tutsis the answer has often been "It's time to fight".

Cyprus is a dual society consisting of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. They cannot get on either. But each group has an official external patron in defence of its interest—Greece and Turkey. This external power equation has stabilized the internal confrontation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.[11] The Hutu and the Tutsi in Rwanda have no external patrons of comparable legitimacy. The internal convulsion in Rwanda could not be contained by an external balance of power as it has been in Cyprus.

Northern Ireland is also a dual society. Is it to be compared with Cyprus—with a balance of power between the Republic of Ireland favouring Catholics and Britain favouring Protestants? Until 1994 Northern Ireland turned out to be more like Rwanda—with polarization between Catholics and Protestants widening without clear patronage of either party by external powers, British or Irish.[12]

In Northern Ireland, the tragedy in relations between the two groups took the form of terrorism over a period of two decades. In Rwanda, the tragedy has taken the form of inter-communal slaughters of shorter duration, but much larger in casualty figures. In both Rwanda and Northern Ireland, the dual society is still hurting if not bleeding. Human rights have been among the casualties.

But why cannot the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda get along? They are very similar in culture and language, and both suffered under German and Belgian imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[13]

The Tutsis were traditionally lovers of animals, devoted to their cattle. The Hutus were lovers of land, devoted to cultivation and to the burial places of their ancestors. The Tutsi minority were pastoralists; the Hutu majority were planters and cultivators. The Tutsi diet of maximum milk and minimum meat and minimum grain produced a "physically lean race". The Hutu diet of more ample meat, grain and vegetables had a different impact on physical features. They were all black, but

they had minor physical differences arising from diet and life-styles across centuries. These minor physical differences were not relevant to the ethnic prejudices. They were just incidental.

In pre-colonial times, the pastoralist Tutsis succeeded in conquering the cultivating Hutus. A class or caste system developed with the Tutsi in a privileged position. However, African traditions allowed for considerable intermarriage and social mobility.

Nevertheless, Rwanda was colonized by the Germans and, after World War I, by the Belgians. The traditional stratification of privileged Tutsi and underprivileged Hutu was made worse and less flexible by the colonial policies of ethnic identity cards and imperial favouritism. The human rights situation worsened in colonial Rwanda.

By 1959 the Hutus had had enough. They rose up in rebellion. They were less against Belgian colonialism than against Tutsi privilege. The Tutsi king was forced into exile. And when Belgian rule ended in 1962, thousands of Tutsis were either killed or terrorized into exile in neighbouring countries.

Independent Rwanda still had enough Tutsis (considerably less than 20%) to make it a dual society. The Hutus could have established a more equitable society for everybody. They could have established a regime more respectful of human rights. Unfortunately, Hutu soldiers captured power and an ethnically repressive political order was consolidated. This time the Tutsis were the victims. The regime's propaganda and ideology were officially anti-Tutsi.

But what caused the latest breakdown in Rwanda? Partly the resurgence of Tutsi exiles into a fighting force. The exiles in Uganda had helped the Ugandan leader Yoweri Kaguta Museveni fight his way to power in Kampala in 1986. In return Museveni promised the Rwandan exiles his help in their efforts to return to their own home in Rwanda, by whatever means necessary.[14]

When a peaceful return of the Tutsi exiles was not acceptable to the Hutu government in Rwanda, the exiles launched their Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) with the aim of fighting their way back into their country to liberate it from ethnic tyranny and gross violations of human rights.

At first the RPF was thwarted by French troops who were literally flown into Rwanda in 1990 to help the Hutu government, whom the French had been arming anyhow. The French were also concerned that

if the RPF won the war in Rwanda, there would be an English-speaking government in Kigali instead of a French-speaking one. Since the Rwandan exiles in RPF had grown up in English-speaking Uganda and been educated in Ugandan schools, most of them were now Anglophile rather than Francophone.

French support for the Hutu government before 1994 was enough to force a stalemate in the first round of the war. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and neighbouring African states then brought the governments of Rwanda and Burundi together along with the RPF, to discuss long-term solutions.

Burundi is also inhabited by Hutus and Tutsis with a colonial history comparable to that of Rwanda. But in Burundi the Tutsis never lost political control after independence.

A long-term agreement was worked out in neighbouring Tanzania for Rwanda and Burundi in April 1994. It was when the two presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were on their way back from Tanzania that their plane crashed or was shot down over Kigali airport, and all on board were killed on April 6, 1994.[15]

Was this plane-crash what triggered off the anti-Tutsi mayhem in Rwanda after April 10? Or did the official radio in Rwanda deliberately incite the Hutu militia, the Hutu army, and the Hutu population to rise and "kill every Tutsi in sight"? Were both the plane crash and the incendiary broadcasts part of a prior conspiracy to sabotage the reconciliation agreements worked out in Tanzania? Was there deliberate and purposeful genocide? Some of these questions are not fully answered yet.

But some people ask one additional question. Why don't Africans themselves come to the rescue in such situations? In the case of Rwanda, it was an African army which ended the chaos—the Rwanda Patriotic Front. This was a successful "Bay of Pigs" operation—and much more legitimate than that launched by John F. Kennedy against Cuba in 1961.

Both the original "Bay of Pigs" operation and the RPF penetration were intended to be wars of liberation led by exiles of their respective countries. But the former was a brainchild of the United States and designed to serve American rather than Cuban interests in the first instance. The RPF is a genuine Rwandan organization and serves the interests of Rwandans rather than the government of Uganda in the first instance.

The original "Bay of Pigs" was a total failure.[16] The 1994 RPF operation was militarily successful, but the political task of winning the trust of the Hutu population will take much longer.

Up to a quarter of the population of the country has fled for refuge into Zaire and Tanzania, partly at the instigation of those Hutu broadcasts which more recently have called upon the population to run or risk being "butchered" by the RPF.

Although the RPF is mainly Tutsi, it has installed a Hutu President and a Hutu Prime Minister among its first political moves. It has declared its intention to fulfil the agreements of reconciliation worked out in Tanzania. Inspite of immense ethnic provocation, the RPF has so far shown impressive discipline and sense of purpose. Rwanda is indeed Africa's worst tragedy of 1994. But let us also remember that the Rwanda Patriotic Front may turn out to be Africa's success story of 1994—provided its soldiers maintain their political promises to both sides of the dual society in Rwanda. Social justice and human rights are at stake.

In the wider world, the division is not between two small ethnic groups but virtually between the world of lighter skinned and darker skinned peoples. It is these trends which threaten a global apartheid structure.[17] Let us look at these trends more closely.

The global apartheid takes three different forms:

1. Structural Racism and Its Inequalities: this is caused by historical factors of prior discrimination and social impediments. Today's consequences may include higher infant mortality, crime, alcoholism, drug-abuse and low economic performance among the disadvantaged.

2. Overt attitudinal racism: these are the emotional prejudices, attitudinal reactions and responses to the racial situation.

3. Pseudo-scientific racism: this comes with theories of race, going back to neo-Darwinism in the nineteenth century and to even older concepts of the Great Chain of Being. The 1994 version of that pseudo-scientific theorizing is the book *The Bell Curve* by Richard Hernstein and Charles Murray. We shall return to this book later.

Between structural and attitudinal apartheid

Now that secular ideological divisions between East and West have declined in relevance, are we witnessing the re-emergence of primordial allegiances? Are we witnessing new forms of retribalisation on the global arena—from Natal in South Africa to Bosnia-Herzegovina, from

Los Angeles to Slovakia. Is it true that in Europe two levels of retribalisation are discernible?

In Eastern Europe micro-retribalization is particularly strong. Micro-retribalization is concerned with micro-ethnicity, involving such conflicts as:

- Serbs vs Croats,
- Russians vs Ukrainians,
- Czechs vs Slovaks.

(Hutus vs Tutsis model in the European context).

On the other hand, Western Europe shows strides in regional integration in spite of such hiccups as the 1992 referendum in Denmark against the Maastricht Treaty.[18] Regional integration can be macro-retrib alization if it is race-conscious.

Macro-retribalization can be solidarity of White people, an arrogant Pan-Europeanism greater in ambition than anything since the Holy Roman Empire.

For both Eastern and Western Europe, is the White world closing ranks? Will we see a more united White world, and potentially more prosperous, presiding over the fate of fragmented and persistently indigent black world? Is this the prognosis for the 21st century?

To put it another way, now that apartheid in South Africa is disintegrating, is there a global apartheid in the process of formation? With the end of the Cold War, is the White world closing ranks at the global level—in spite of current divisions within individual countries like the former Yugoslavia? Is the danger particularly acute between Black and White people? Will we see a more united and potentially more prosperous White world presiding over the fate of the Black peoples of the 21st century?

In addition to the Black-White divide in the world, Muslim countries may have special reasons to worry in the era after the Cold War. Is Islam replacing communism as the West's perceived adversary?[19] Did the West exploit the Gulf War of 1991 to put Islam and its holiest places under the umbrella of Pax Americana? It is to some of these issues that we turn.

There was a time when White people of the Soviet Union colonized fellow White people of Eastern Europe—while at the same time Soviet weapons and money were helping Black liberation. In other words, Moscow was an imperial power in Europe, and a liberating force in

Africa. At the global level alliances for or against imperialism did not coincide with racial differences.

Indeed, the liberation of Black people from White minority governments in Africa would probably have been delayed by at least a generation without the support of White socialist governments during the days of the Cold War.[20]

The end of the Cold War has ended inter-White rivalries within the Third World. On the positive side this has meant an earlier end to African civil wars. The war in Eritrea would not have lasted 30 years had there been no external encouragement. The war in Angola would not have lasted into the mid-1990s if the Cold war between the superpowers had ended sooner. Similar things can be said of the war in Mozambique—which was virtually a child of external racist manipulation.

On the negative side, former members of the Warsaw Pact have lost all interest in supporting Third World causes. Leninist anti-imperialism seems to be as dead as other aspects of Leninism. Marxism-Leninism, while it lasted, was trans-racial.

It made European Marxists seek allies and converts among people of colour. European identity, on the other hand, is by definition Eurocentric. It increases the chances of Pan-Europeanism. The bad news is that Pan-Europeanism can carry the danger of cultural chauvinism and even racism.

Anti-Semitism has been on the rise in Eastern Europe as an aspect of this cultural chauvinism. And racism and xenophobia in the reunified Germany have reached new levels. Racism in France has taken its highest toll among North Africans. And all over Europe there is a new sense of insecurity among immigrants who are of a darker hue than the local populations—some of the immigrants further north may even be Portuguese mistaken as Turks or North Africans. Where does xenophobia end and racism begin? An old dilemma has once again reared its head.[21]

Then, there is the racial situation in the United States, with all its contradictions. On the one hand, the country had changed enough to produce the first Black governor of a state (Virginia) and the first Black mayor of New York City. On the other hand, the state of Louisiana produced, in 1991, a startling level of electoral support for David Duke, a former member of the Ku Klux Klan and former advocate of Nazi policies.

Duke got a majority of the White votes which were cast but lost the election because of the other votes. In April 1992, a mainly White jury in California found that beating and kicking of a Black suspect (Rodney King) while he was down was not excessive force. The verdict sparked off the worst riots in U.S. history in which nearly sixty people were killed in Los Angeles.[22]

George Bush had himself exploited White racial fears in the presidential election campaign of 1988. A television commercial of the Bush campaign had exploited to the utmost the image of a Black convict Willie Horton who had been prematurely "furloughed" in Massachusetts —and who killed again. The television commercial was probably a significant factor behind George Bush's victory in the presidential election of 1988.[23]

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court of the United States has been moving further and further to the right—endangering some of the inter-racial constitutional gains of yesteryears. The new right wing Supreme Court has been legalizing atrocities which range from violence by prison wardens to kidnapping by U.S. agents in countries like Mexico.[24] The economic conditions of the Black underclass in the United States are as bad as ever.

Poverty, drug abuse, crime, broken homes, unemployment, infant mortality, and now the disproportionate affliction by AIDS are a stubborn part of the Black condition in America. When is "benign neglect" of Blacks a violation of human rights?

The holocausts of the Western hemisphere have continued to the present day to inflict pain and humiliation on native Americans and descendants of African slaves. Approximately 40% of prisoners on death-row in the United States are African-Americans.[25] The jails, mortuaries, and police cells still bear anguished testimony to the disproportionate and continuing suffering of American holocausts. In the United States today there are more male descendants of African slaves in prison than in college. American legislators would like to send even more to prison as penalties are made more severe.

Equally ominous on a continental scale is the economic condition of Africa itself. The continent still produces what it does not consume, and consumes what it does not produce. Agriculturally, many African countries have evolved dessert and beverage economies—producing what are, at best, elements of incidental consumption in the Northern

hemisphere. These dessert-and-beverage economies produce cocoa, coffee, tea and other incidentals for the Northern dining table. In contrast, Africa imports the fundamentals of its existence—from basic equipment to staple food.[26]

In addition, Africa is liable to environmental hazards which sometimes lead on to drought and famine in certain African areas. The Horn of Africa and the Sahel have been particularly prone to these ecological deprivations.[27]

The external factors which have retarded Africa's economic development include price fluctuations and uncertainties about primary commodities—issues over which Africa has had very little say. The debt crisis in Africa is also a major shackle on the pace of development. Although compared with what countries like Brazil and Mexico owe, the debts of African countries and economies are not only smaller, but also more fragile than those of the major Latin American states. When is debt a form of indentured labour? When is debt a violation of human rights?[28]

The West has shown more flexibility in recent times about Africa's debt crisis. And some Western countries have been ready to extend debt forgiveness. Speedy action towards resolving the debt problem would be a contribution in the fight against the forces of global apartheid.

Just as African societies are getting more democratic, African states are having less influence on the global scene than ever. African people are increasing their influence on their governments - just when African countries are losing leverage on the world system. As the African electorate is getting empowered, the African countries are getting enfeebled.

Africa's international marginalization does include among its causes the absence of the Soviet bloc as a countervailing force in the global equation. A world with only one superpower is a world with less leverage for the smaller countries in the global system. Africa's marginalization is also due to the re-emergence of Eastern European countries as rivals for Western attention and Western largess.

Africa is also being marginalized in a world of such mega-economies as an increasingly unified North America, an increasingly unified European Community, an expanding Japanese economy, and some of the achievements of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In the economic domain, global apartheid is a starker and sharper

reality between White nations and Black nations than between White nations and some of the countries of Asia.

In the United Nations and its agencies, Africa is also getting marginalized, partly because Third World causes have lost the almost automatic support of former members of the Warsaw Pact. On the contrary, former members of the Socialist bloc are now more likely to follow the American lead than join forces with the Third World. Moreover, the African percentage of the total membership of the UN system is declining. In 1991 five new members were admitted to the United Nations—none of them African. (Two Koreas and three Baltic States). The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union resulted in some fifteen or more members. The numerical marginalization of Africa within the world body is likely to continue.

In the financial world, the power of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund not only remains intact, but is bound to increase in the era of global apartheid. It was once said of a British monarch: "The power of the king has increased, is increasing and ought to diminish". I once quoted this statement to the President of the World Bank at the time, Mr Barber B. Conable. I meant that the power of the World Bank in Africa had increased, was increasing and ought to be arrested. Unfortunately all indications continue to point in the direction of greater escalation of Africa's dependence upon such international financial institutions.

On the other hand, the World Bank sometimes acts as an ambassador on behalf of Africa—coaxing Japan, for example, to allocate more money for African aid. The World Bank may help to persuade Western countries to bear African needs in mind even as the West remains mesmerized by the continuing drama in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. At its best, the World Bank can be a force against the drift towards global apartheid. But at its worst, the World Bank is an extension of the power of the White races upon the darker peoples of the globe.

It is virtually certain that German money is already being diverted from Tanzania and Bangladesh towards the newly integrated East Germany and to compensate the Soviet Union for its co-operation with German reunification. Western money before long will be going in larger amounts to Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the newly independent Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Western investment in former Warsaw Pact countries may also be at the expense of investment in Africa. Western trade may also be re-directed to some extent. Now that white Westerners and white Easterners no longer have an ideological reason for mutual hostility, macro-tribality may triumph.

The politics of scientific racism

The third aspect of global apartheid is the revival of pseudo-scientific theories of racial explanation for intellectual and economic performance at just about the time when the Afrikaaner racists in South Africa were at last handing over power to Nelson Mandela.

Afrikaaner theories of Black inferiority were ostensibly Biblical and based on religion; the new White American theories of Black inferiority are ostensibly statistical and based on science.[29] Afrikaaner theories of Black inferiority claimed divine inspiration; the new breed of White American theories of race claim neo-Darwinian validation.

Afrikaaner theories of Black inferiority were promoted in a medium sized country in far-away Africa—a South Africa with little external influence. Theories like that of *The Bell Curve* by Richard Hernstein and Charles Murray are being promoted with high-blitz publicity in the most influential country in the world, the United States of America.[30]

Because Afrikaaner theories of race were ultimately based on religion, their persuasive power in a secular world was rather limited. But because theories like *The Bell Curve* are ostensibly based on graphs, charts and statistics, their persuasive power in a world which is impressed by science is frightening.

Hernstein and Murray are in fact saying: "The fault, Black man, is not in your stars but in your genes that you are an underling".

It is an old tradition in the United States. Far from giving Black folks reparations, Hernstein and Murray would not even give hungry Black mothers food for their children, or aspiring minorities the advantages of affirmative action. Not just benign neglect, but brutal neglect, is the policy being recommended.

In 1781, a bare five years after the US Declaration of Independence which declared "all men were created equal", a British ship was bringing a shipload of slaves to the Americas. In the middle of the Atlantic the Captain decided that there might not be enough food and water for

everybody all the way to the Americas. So the Captain ordered that 133 slaves should be thrown overboard.

Some abolitionists in England later took the Captain to court in the hope of making a charge of murder stick. The Court ruled that since those who drowned were slaves, they were property rather than persons. At worst it was a case of destroying property rather than murder.[31]

Brutal neglect of African Americans today is the late 20th century equivalent of "throwing them overboard". There are rates of infant mortality among Africans Americans, and rates of self-destructive homicide, which are almost as horrendous as the drowning at mid-Atlantic. And these cruel indignities are happening today in one of the richest countries in human history.

Nor is this a situation where the offending Captain can escape the consequences. No nation can long flourish half desperate, half triumphant. The quality of life for Whites as well as Blacks is suffering.

As polarization persists, so does the Black-White dualism fester. The Hutu-Tutsi factor lies deep in the American experience.

A nation may not long endure half devastated, half prosperous. Hernstein and Murray are overlooking the fact that the maladies of Blacks today will become the maladies of Whites tomorrow.[32] We may already be having a national moral crisis. A creeping decay is affecting Whites as well as Blacks.

Today married couples in the USA are down to their smallest percentage of this nation's households since the eighteenth century. And even as compared with 60 % of the households up in the 1980 census, married couples are now down to 55 per cent.[33]

It is estimated that while 81 per cent of White children born in 1952 lived with both parents through the age of 18, only 30% of White children born in 1980 will live with both parents through age 18.[34]

William J. Bennett, former Secretary of Education, has reminded us: "According to a study of Whites, daughters of single parents are 164 per cent more likely to have premarital birth, and 92 per cent more likely to dissolve their marriages."[35] The USA has the highest divorce rate of any country in the world with reliable figures.

The number of White births out of wedlock in 1960 were 2 per cent of all births. In 1991 these so-called "illegitimate" births among Whites had increased by more than tenfold to 22 per cent. By the year 2000 it is

estimated that 40% of all American births and 80% of minority births will be out of wedlock.[36] Can a nation long endure half devastated and half triumphant?

Since 1990, twice as many Americans have been murdered by fellow Americans as were killed in the Vietnam War.

While the population of the USA has increased only 41 per cent since 1960, the number of crimes has increased more than 550 per cent.[37]

Every year about 5 million Americans are casualties of violent crimes—they are raped, robbed, assaulted, or murdered. Every year 19 million Americans are casualties of crimes against their properties—burglary, theft, arson, etc.

William J. Bennett, in his book, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators: Facts and Figures on the State of American Society (1994)* had the following to say:

> "A young black man living in Harlem is less likely to live until the age of 40 than a young man in Bangladesh . . . . Homicide is now far and away the leading cause of death among African-American teenagers."[38]

Since 1960 the rate at which White teenagers are taking their own lives has more than tripled. Among all races, suicide is now the second leading cause of death among American adolescents.

It is true that race and racism continue to be part of the overall picture of social pathology in the United States.[39] Young African Americans are arrested five times the rate of young Whites for violent crimes, making Blacks judicially accountable for half such crimes.

Nevertheless, from 1982 to 1992, FBI statistics indicate that the rate of arrests for violent crimes rose twice as fast among young Whites as among young Blacks. Crime is crossing racial boundaries even faster.[40]

Islam and crime in America

It is estimated that 42 per cent of the United States' six million Muslims are African Americans. By a strange twist of destiny just a little more than 42 per cent of all violent crimes committed in the United States are attributed to African Americans. Are the Islamized African Americans mainly among the "saved" in the statistics of American crime—or are they among the "sinners"?

There is evidence to suggest that African American converts to Islam are among those who manifest a considerable decline in percentage of homicide, drugs, alcoholism and indeed rate of arrest. There is evidence to suggest that Islam in America is one point of exit from the horrors of the Black condition. And yet even among African Americans themselves a race cannot long endure half devastated and half "saved".

And so two forms of *jihad* have appeared among African-American Muslims. Self-regarding *jihad* is a struggle against the enemy within. It must include unrelenting efforts to help those devastated or compromised by drug abuse, alcohol abuse, irresponsible sexuality and readily available guns.

Other-regarding *jihad* is a declaration of hostilities against outsiders who perpetrate injustices on Muslims and people of colour. Other-regarding *jihad* is, by definition, primarily a struggle against the enemy without.

Among African Americans there are universalist Muslims and nationalist Muslims. Universalist Muslims belong to mainstream Islamic denominations, especially Sunni and Shia. Paradoxically, such universalist Muslims include the sons of the late Elijah Muhammad, the co-founder of the Nation of Islam, the ultimate nationalist denomination.

On the other hand, nationalist African-American Muslims are now led by Louis Farrakhan. The nationalists are more Afrocentric in their interpretation of Islam, and more race conscious in their attitudes to the White world. The nationalists also regard it as artificial and meaningless to fight Zionism without confronting world Jewry. Their anti-Zionism therefore comes pretty close to being anti-Semitism.[41]

The nationalists are also more active in self-regarding *jihad*. They have done more than any other group to help Black neighbourhoods in the United States fight off drug peddlers and control alcoholism, and the traffic in guns. Nationalists have done this in Black neighbourhoods regardless of whether those neighbourhoods included Muslim residents or not. Was the solidarity religious or racial? Was it UMMA or MAU (Movement for African Unity—as in Mau Mau)? The nationalist Muslims operate at both levels equally strongly—perhaps with an edge for racial solidarity.

With regard to the other-regarding *jihad*, both universalist Muslims and nationalist Muslims are concerned about "the enemy without", but

there is no consensus as to who that enemy is. Recent immigrant Muslims in the United States are inevitably influenced by politics in their own countries of origin. Iranian-Americans, Algerian-Americans, Sudanese-Americans, Egyptian-Americans, Libyan-Americans and Pakistani-Americans all reflect to some extent (but by no means exactly) the divisions of political opinion in their ancestral societies.

When I met Malcolm X in the early 1960s, he was a nationalist Muslim and I was a Sunni Muslim. I could relate totally to Malcolm as a Black person, but at that time I could not relate to him as a Muslim. His formulation of Islam (so racially rooted) was in those days totally alien to me.

But after Malcolm X went on pilgrimage to Mecca, he discovered universalist Islam. He circumambulated the Kaaba with people of different skin-colour, but dressed in the same colour of clothes (white). It blew Malcolm's mind. He literally became a twice-born Muslim, in the most remarkable sense imaginable. Just as the earliest Muslims had moved from one *qibla* (Jerusalem) to another (Mecca), so Malcolm moved from one *qibla* (race) to another (religion).[42] The new conversion probably cost him his life. Was Malcolm X the first African American *shahid* of the 20th century?

But can a Muslim community long endure half vulnerable, half triumphant? The United States is the only major industrial democracy which is increasing the use of capital punishment rather than moving towards its complete elimination. Most of its major Western European allies have got rid of capital punishment.

And Israel tends to use it mainly for Nazi criminals of genocide. How sensitive is the United States to the racial implications of capital punishment?

The United States does not realize that certainty of punishment is probably a greater deterrent against crime than severity of punishment. American public opinion and politicians seek to escalate severity of punishment without doing very much about increasing the certainty of punishment for offenders. Nearly 3 out of every 4 convicted criminals are not imprisoned. In 1990, 62% of the estimated 4.3 million persons in correctional custody in the USA were on probation and 12% on parole. Fewer than 1 in 10 serious crimes result in imprisonment.

In 1992, the median prison sentence for murder was about 15 years, while the average time served was 5 years—except if your name was Sirhan Sirhan, the killer of Robert Kennedy. If you include the uncertainty, in 1990 the expected punishment for someone committing murder was 1.8 years in prison; for rape, the expected sentence was 60 days; for robbery, 23 days; and for aggravated assault, 6.4 days.[43]

Instead of tightening up the existing correctional system, American public opinion and U.S. politicians are in favour of having more people on death row. How have Muslim offenders benefitted by the laxity of the correctional system and its uncertainties? How are they likely to suffer by escalating severity of punishments?

In the United States, citizens are indeed less and less afraid of their governments—but, alas, citizens are more and more afraid of each other. This is in sharp contrast to many Muslim cities which have far less violence and crime than American cities. Teheran is about the size of New York City in population (some 10 million people). And yet in Teheran, families during holidays go picnicking in public parks in the middle of the night, while New Yorkers do not trust even their neighbours. New Yorkers are less afraid of their government than the people of Teheran, but New Yorkers are more afraid of each other than are the people of Teheran.

Iranians are capable of large scale political violence for a revolution or for a war. But they are less inclined to attack each other for petty gain (through mugging) or for brutal sexual satisfaction (through rape). That is why ordinary Iranians are less afraid of each other than ordinary Americans are.

Conclusion

The cost which the United States as a whole is paying for the status quo is partly because of its fundamental neglect of its disadvantaged minorities. No nation can long endure half-traumatized, half victorious. The political will has to be found to let the Black world have the resources for a more viable transformation at long last.

For African Americans, the answer may have to be a domestic Marshall Plan. In the 1940s, the United States defeated Germany and Japan—and then instead of demanding reparations from them, the

United States poured in billions of dollars into the vanquished enemies.[44]

The people of the Black world have never been enemies of the US inspite of having been exploited by the US, and having had their human rights denied.

Is it not time to launch a Black Marshall Plan? Is it not time to correct the trends towards global apartheid? Is it not time to heal the global dualism—and let the global Hutus and global Tutsis find peace through equity at last?

Once again the tragedy of Rwanda becomes a metaphor. Hutus and Tutsis of the world unite—you have nothing to lose but your blood-stained dualism.

Endnotes

1. Enunciated by Abraham Lincoln at the Illinois Republican State Convention, June16, 1858. For complete text of speech, see Roy P. Basler, ed. *Abraham Lincoln: His Speeches and Writings* Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1946, 372-81.

2. A compelling portrait of this situation is presented in *Andrew Hacker, Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile and Unequal* New York and Toronto: Scribner's and Maxwell MacMillan International, 1992.

3. Post-colonial legacy in Africa particularly has not improved the lot of the common people, and in some cases, has led to deteriorating conditions; consult, for instance, Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State* New York: Times Books, Random House, 1992, for a readable analysis.

4. On the German reparations to Israel, see, for instance, Nicholas Balabkins, *West German Reparations to Israel,* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971.

5. An argument establishing the economic basis for reparations to Black America is made by Robert Browne, "The Economic Basis for Reparations to Black America," *The Review of Black Political Economy,* 21 (Winter 1993): 99-110.

6. For an interesting but dated discussion of the human rights concept that goes beyond the Western-oriented concept of human rights, see Fouad Ajami, *Human Rights and World Order Politics* New York: World Order Models Project, 1978 Working Paper No. 4.

7. See Gernot Kohler, *Global Apartheid* New York: World Order Models Project,1978, Working Paper No. 7.

8. For a more recent and fuller explication of this argument, see Ali A. Mazrui,"Global Apartheid? Race and Religion in the New World Order," in *Beyond the Cold War: New Dimensions in International Relations* eds., Geir Lundestad and O. Arne Westad New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, 85-98.

9. For another example, consult Ali A. Mazrui, "Dual Zimbabwe: Towards Averting Political Schizophrenia," *Issue XL*, _ (1981), 5-12.

10. See "Velvet Divorce?" *The Economist* 323, June 13, 1992 : 53-54.

11. On the twists and turns of the attempted resolution of the Cyprus conflict, consult Norma Salem ed., *Cyprus: A Regional Conflict and its Resolution*, New York: St. Martin's Press in association with the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, 1992, and Jay Rothman, "Conflict Research and Resolution: Cyprus," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 518* (November 1991): 95-108.

12. For a guide to the Irish conflict, see, for example, Donald P. Doumitt, *Conflict in Northern Ireland: the History, the Problem, and the Challenge* New York: P. Lang, 1985.

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14. Consult "Rwanda Puzzle: Is Uganda Taking Sides?" *The New York Times*, April 18, 1994: A6.

15. See *The New York Times*, April 7, 1994: A1, for a report on the crash in which Rwanda President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntayamira were killed.

16. As described by Trumbull Higgins, *The Perfect Failure:Kennedy, Eisenhower and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs*, New York: Norton, 1987.

17. See Mazrui, "Global Apartheid?" in Lundestad and Westad, eds. *Beyond the Cold War: 85-98.*

18. The Danes later approved the treaty on May 18, 1993 by the narrow margin of 56.8 per cent for, and 43.2 per cent against. For a report, see *The New York Times*, May 19, 1993: A1.

19. See, for example, the controversial article by Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72 (Summer 1993): 22-49, and the responses by Fouad Ajami, Kishore Mahbubani, Liu Binyan, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Albert Weeks and Gerard Piel in *Foreign Affairs* 72 (September/October 1993): 2-26.

20. Indeed, this may be true in much of the so-called Third World; for an account of Soviet support and relations to such movements, consult Galia Golan, *The Soviet Union and National Liberation Movements in the Third World*, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988.

21. Europe, unlike the United States, has only just started to deal with the experience of minorities who are completely different in culture from the majority; consult Mel Read, *Against A Rising Tide: Racism*, Europe and 1992 Nottingham: Spokesman for Nottingham Racial Equality Council and European Labor Forum, 1991, and for a comparative view of immigration in Western Europe and the United States, consult H. B. Entzinger and Jack Carter, eds., *Immigration in Western Democracies: the United States and Western Europe* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1989.

22. There is a fuller discussion of the racial situation in the United States in Chapter 8 of Darryl Thomas, *The Theory and Politics of Third World Solidarity* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995 forthcoming.

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30. Richard Hernstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve*, New York: Free Press,1994.

31. This tragic case was cited at the opening of the Liverpool Exhibition on the Slave Trade and Slave Shipments at the Liverpool Museum, England, October 1994, and discussed in the *Meridian* programme, British Broadcasting Corporation, World Service, October 25, 1994.

32. Would not the United States be better off if its Black American males, instead of being dead or in prison, were educated and employed? It costs far more to maintain a prisoner in jail ($30-100,000 per year) than to educate the person even in an Ivy League school (where expenses might run to about $20,000 per year). But White America is far more ready to spend money on prisons than education!

33. See William J. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators: Facts and Figures on the State of American Society*, New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1994, p. 56.

34. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 51.

35. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 52.

36. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 47.

37. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 22.

38. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 25-27.

39. It must be noted that the diffusion of attitudes from Blacks to Whites is not just in the social pathology area; the diffusion may be also positive or neutral, as, for example, in the areas of music (jazz and rap) and dress (baggy pants).

40. See *New York Times*, May 16, 1994: A1 for a detailed analysis of these statistics.

41. For two views on Farrakhan, see Arch Puddington, "Black Anti-Semitism and How it Grows," *Commentary* 97, April 1994: 19-24, and Julius Lester, "Blacks, Jews and Farrakhan," *Dissent*, 41 (Summer 1994):365-69.

42. For details on the impact of the pilgrimage on Malcolm X, consult Chapter 17 of Malcolm X, with Alex Haley *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, New York: Ballantine Books.

43. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, p. 35.

44. On the Marshall Plan, consult, for example, Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe*, 1947-1952 Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987; Stanley Hoffman and Charles Maier, eds., *The Marshall Plan: In Retrospective Boulder*, Westview Press, 1984; and David Hellwood, "The Impact of the Marshall Plan," *History* 74 (October 1989): 427-36.

The United Nations and the Rights of Peoples and Nations in the "New World Order"

Erskine Childers

In the title of my remarks the phrase "the new world order" is advisedly in quotation. It was coined by Northern hegemonists at a moment when they thought there was going to be such a new order following the evaporation of the Cold War and the hijacking of the United Nations (UN) for the Gulf Massacre. There have been immense changes in the fabric of international relations in the past five years, but they have not resulted in any new "order". On the contrary, I would submit that both the South and the North, and therefore the UN, are in a period of enormous fluidity under newly released forces. Some of these forces have been in gestation for centuries, some for decades; some were frozen during the Cold War, some created or exacerbated by it; all have been unleashed by the apparent end of that insane North-North contest.

The weakened South in the Cold-War period

When the UN was born in 1945, the world was weighed down with the legacies of the age of Northern empires. Europe had raced forward in progress over some four hundred years using the philosophy, social and physical science and technology which it had had to import from the South for the very foundations of its knowledge in every discipline; but it placed that same South in total stasis. The empires closed down all endogenous evolution of political thought and institutions; imposed totally arbitrary frontiers that ripped apart whole peoples and kinship groups; and implanted within these alien boundaries the structures of an equally alien European-centrist state. And while Europe evolved its neighbour-relationships in centuries of tribal war, Europe prevented

the South from even that form of evolution of neighbouring relationships, so that ancient disputes and antagonisms were merely frozen under Northern rule. Across the whole of the South, an imperial economic system replaced vibrant indigenous production systems with distortive extractionist economies and infrastructure.

When the grassfire sweep of Asian, Arab and African liberation movements compelled the European empires to allow legal independencies, these had to be established within the same exogenous frontiers, or last-minute new partitions. And in an enormous new irony, these alien borders then became sacrosanct under the Charter on accession to membership in the UN, their social and economic distortions yet again perpetuated. One consequence of this was the Iraq-Kuwait crisis.

Inside those boundaries the great majority of humankind were, however, still not left free to resume their own endogenous intellectual, political and institutional evolution. The rival Northern powers, but overwhelmingly the Western powers in their paranoid fear of the USSR gaining too many friends, thrust their Cold War contest down into this ostensibly liberated South, installing and arming dictator after dictator, training their secret police and death squads, and seeing to the pervasive corruption of new urban elites by corporations and arms merchants. Any and every promising popular representative leadership that embraced the tenets of non-alignment was regarded as a danger to be destabilised and if possible overthrown, directly or from neighbouring client dictatorships or colonial settler regimes. And where such countries were not actually ravaged in internal conflict by these means, as for example were Angola and Mozambique, the constant covert attacks generated an inevitable authoritarian siege mentality.

Gigantic Challenges in the International Arena

Only now, with the end of at least the Cold War form of Northern subversion and suppression, is the South able to try to resume its own evolutionary processes. But it now confronts these gigantic challenges in the worst possible economic circumstances for most of humankind, and with the United Nations gravely weakened in its economic roles and capacities.

The history of this weakening needs brief recapitulation. It was not accidental. It began when the industrial powers realised that, once made

universal in membership, the UN System could apply its Charter mandates to replace the imperial economic order with a socially democratic and equitably managed real-world economy. So they set out to block and weaken that system. They refused, and still refuse in every most crucial factor, to accept that a new world economic framework exists, with nearly four times as many states seeking their fair share of world product and trade as when the UN was created.

A specialised agency of the UN that was intended to play a critical role in this, the International Trade Organization, was opposed by the United States and replaced by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which should have been called the Specific Agreement to Maintain the Imperial Trading System, and which never addressed the trading concerns of the majority of humankind. The proposal for SUNFED, which would have been a soft-loan window of the UN, governed by the General Assembly, was also deliberately killed by creating the IDA soft-loan window of the World Bank which the industrial powers could control. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which was supposed to become the world's central bank, equitably intervening in both surplus and deficit countries, was converted into an external dictatorship over the economic policies of most of humankind, using the single most powerful form of intimidation—the threat of denying a country credit rating anywhere in the world. The UN Secretariat's macroeconomic policy analysis and formulation capabilities were steadily weakened, while the powers built up such staff capacities in the World Bank and the IMF. All proposals from the South for a new international economic order were scorned even if adopted by the General Assembly, and UNCTAD's structural analyses and proposals were equally ignored.

This relentless attrition of the originally designed UN System has had devastating effects. Where 30 years ago, 80 per cent of humankind at least had a 28 per cent share of world trade, today they have only 18 per cent. The North's protectionist barriers against attempted Southern exports to the North, combined with manipulated interest rates and other imposed iniquities, are depriving the countries of the South of more than $500 billion of income that they could be earning every year; 10 times all the North's "aid" to the South. Astonishingly mendacious invocations of growth inside a handful of countries are purveyed to suggest that Northern economic policies imposed through the IMF and

the Bank are working for the South. The North-South disparity has in fact widened enormously. In 1960, the richest one-fifth of humankind was already earning thirty times what the poorest one-fifth could earn; now it earns over sixty times more than the poorest one-fifth. The indebtedness of the South has increased 14 times since 1970, to now some $1.4 trillion. The number of people barely surviving in absolute poverty has increased by 40 per cent in only the last 15 years, to some 1.4 billion.

Northern political and economic policies include eroding the very products of historic social revolutions. For example, the IMF has instructed that Egypt's agrarian reform should be dismantled, while Washington's price for Mexico's accession to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) included undoing the *ejido* system of protection of land for small farmers.

The present policies of the Northern powers guarantee that soon, one in every three human beings alive on this planet will be only existing on the very margins of daily survival. When comparable conditions existed in Europe there was bloody revolution.

The mandates placed in the UN Charter for the General Assembly to set macroeconomic policy for "the economic and social advancement of all peoples" have to date been nullified. The Northern industrial powers refuse to accept the UN as the economic policy-centrepiece, insisting that monetary and finance policy issues belong in the IMF and the World Bank, which they control and which they then make sure do not address such issues. Conservative media regularly report that the annual G-7 summits deal with the "the global economy". This is also outright fiction. Their "global economy" is only the North-North economy—Japan, North America, and Europe, less than a quarter of humankind. So we have no macro-policies that address the needs of all humankind on an all-gain basis; and again, the certainty of conflict and upheaval increases.

Thus, most of humankind, in the South, has emerged from the Cold War era economically prostrated; politically ravaged; artificially divided by imperial frontiers imposed without any consultation with people on either side of them; filled with long-suppressed movements of ancient identity, aspiration and socio-economic anger; and strewn with the abandoned weaponry of a meaningless North-North ideological

contest. And in one crisis after another resulting from the unfreezing of all these legacies of empire and Cold War, something called "the UN" is supposed to respond. But the euphoric prospect enunciated across the North, that in the Cold War's apparent end the UN would be "re-discovered", with the powers now fulfilling their originally claimed role as "the world's policemen", has not materialised. For the North is also in gigantic flux.

Although seldom acknowledged, the Western powers bankrupted themselves in the Cold War no less than the Soviet Union; their more resilient economies have only managed to handle unprecedented levels of indebtedness by mutual support and by mortgaging their children's futures. But the strain, combined with the social stresses brought on by the current thraldom of Northern elites to the single most dangerous fundamentalist religion in the world—that which worships the magic of the unregulated market—is now clearly producing an epochal change in world power politics. For the elites in the major powers are now acknowledging that they do not have the money, and their citizens that they do not have the stomach, to be "the world's policemen".

The UN in a unipolar world

Where only yesterday we were informed that we had entered "the era of a single superpower", President Clinton has now retracted his early support for multilateralism; there will be no advance commitment of US forces for UN operations and none under UN command; he is now seeking a reduction in the US assessed share of UN peacekeeping costs (which means a reduction in US leverage); and the new Republican-controlled Congress will be far more hostile to the UN. Nor is even a Northern regional power bloc such as the European Union free of this flux and uncertainty: its scandalous failure to protect the human rights of hundreds of thousands of Europeans in former Yugoslavia is witness to the same faltering combined, of course, with the centuries-old Western antagonism towards Muslims.

In all of this we can see a certain recurring pattern. The powers prevent the UN from trying to defuse a conflict early enough to have a chance; then, when they finally agree to its involvement they will not commit their share of the troops that by then will alone stand a chance of protecting masses of civilians. In most cases they also do not agree to

other countries putting in enough troops, which is how they made the delineation by the UN of "safe havens" in Yugoslavia an abjectly unworkable mockery. Or they refuse to provide the logistical support for large-scale troop airlift which they alone possess, as when African countries were ready to send troops under the UN into Rwanda to prevent genocide, but did not have the long-range troop transport aircraft to get them there. When the UN inevitably falters or fails in such operations, this is conveniently described as a UN fiasco.

These elites, however, still feel they must appear to be all-powerful.

We, therefore, also see that in this terminal thrashing about of great-powerdom they wish to use the UN to legitimate unilateral actions abroad before their citizens, but without any control by the UN membership over what they do. This outright abuse of the Charter was, of course, given credence in the Gulf Massacre; it has essentially continued with operations supposedly "under the UN" by Russia in Georgia, France in Rwanda, and by the United States in Somalia in "Operation Restore the Image of George Bush Before He Leaves Office", and most recently in Haiti. And once again, if these ventures under the cloak of the UN fail, they are instantly converted into "another UN fiasco".

Probing the strengths of the UN

How, then, can we draw all these trends and fluidities into some sort of conceptual frame to see where we have to go? I would suggest a frame of four critically important elements.

The first is that we are now in a world of exploding imperial legacies and neglected socioeconomic root causes of upheaval, without the external restraint that the Cold War protagonists imposed on them as a continuum from the empires.

Secondly, the UN must now address these causes of conflict and upheaval, both because they condemn millions of our sisters and brothers to intolerable injustice and because if they are not tackled, even the most perfect UN peace-restoring machinery will be simply overwhelmed by the rage and violence that they are generating.

Yet thirdly, since the first waves of their consequences in conflict and upheaval are already crashing in upon the UN every week, we now have no choice but to tackle both ends of this spectrum—cause and consequence.

Fourthly, however, we must do everything possible to ensure that in its responses to erupting consequence, the UN is not used by the powers for their familiar practice of allowing an aggressor to "create facts on the ground", and then telling the victims that they must be "realistic" and accept fundamental losses of their rights in so-called peace processes.

Looking first at the causal end of the spectrum, it needs to be repeated that there is nothing lacking in the UN System's constitutional mandates or indeed its intended architecture, for such work; the Charter very strongly addresses socioeconomic causes of conflict, not just the maintenance and enforcement of peace and security. The problem has been the deliberate weakening of this balance of mandates.

We must demand that the mandates in the Charter to make the UN the centrepiece for genuinely global, all-gain economic policies are now implemented before the world divides irrevocably and violently. To gear up the UN for its originally intended economic leadership role, the Secretariat's economic staff capacities must be restored, under a Deputy Secretary-General for International Economic Co-operation and Sustainable Development to help the Secretary-General present coherent macro-policy proposals towards global equity. The governance of the IMF must be overhauled: an agency 74 per cent of whose membership has only 34 per cent voting power has no place in a democratic UN System. We must get a proper, genuinely global organization for fair trade, because no amount of "aid" could enable three-quarters of humankind to earn their way, and a rigged trading regime makes it impossible for them to do so.

To address the ethnic and cultural causes of conflict, I believe we need to convert the unused Trusteeship Council into the United Nations Council on Diversity, Representation, and Governance. This should be a quite different type of UN organ: not trying to fashion universal policy, but serving as the world's open "think-tank" and source of wise counsel on the enormous problems of the obsolescent nation-state, the aspirations of tens of millions for greater expression of their ancestral identity, and the problems of reconstituting collapsed states. This Council just commands the respect and actively draws upon the knowledge and insights of social scientists throughout the world. Traditionally trained diplomats readily admit that they are not equipped to deal with this range of problems.

Moving along the spectrum again, from cause towards the eruption of consequence, I would urge that here again we must restore a balance that was originally intended, in the use of conciliation and mediation to defuse a crisis in time. The smaller countries involved in drafting the Charter spent great amounts of time writing Chapter VI on peaceful settlement, in the conviction that resort to Chapter VII, on peace enforcement, should be a last resort, an admission of tragic failure, and would always involve the danger of great-power special interests. This requires recovering the UN from a weakness persistently maintained by the powers during the Cold War—its weakness in crisis research and fact-finding. Not one of the recent conflicts was unpredictable. Northern peace research institutes should actively support Southern regional ones, which should vigorously encourage regional intergovermental organizations to be alert to take initiative before an impending crisis explodes. Where regional initiative may fail, the South should not even await Security Council action if there is the smallest evidence that one or more powers will delay it; the South should just use its General Assembly majority to establish and send—from the Assembly—the impartial high-level UN Fact-Finding Missions which it recently called for.

The current debate at the UN on reform of the Security Council is proof that the majority in the UN can exert itself; it is taking place under the General Assembly, not the Council. The world-wide demand for reform away from permanent and veto-wielding memberships, however, is coming head to head with the demands of Germany and Japan now to be given the very same status. There is some danger that, in the 50th anniversary momentum for reform, the powers will economically intimidate the general membership into a quick-fix solution, whereby Germany and Japan are accommodated in return for a few large Third World countries being corrupted into joining this reliquary cabal and thus extending its sordid existence.

We should oppose Security Council reform being rushed into any dirty compromises. Let there be deadlock and stalemate, until a formula is evolved for a moderately enlarged, veto-free Council, with all members to be elected by the General Assembly based on regional representation that will always include most of these powers. If one or two are suffering excruciating agony in temporary rotation out of an elected seat, they can use Articles 31 and 32, which all the mere ordinary rest of the world

has to use; namely that a country not on the Council but with a clear special interest in a crisis can attend and exert its persuasive influence. It is high time these power-elites got off their high horses and tried working their way in the real world solely by argument. That is the democracy they so constantly preach to the rest of the world.

At the full-scale crisis end of the spectrum I urge that the single most crucial improvement needed is to differentiate the kind of UN response at the outset. It is dangerous and, for the reasons already noted it is usually unworkable, that the only response is a UN military force. We need a distinct, separately organised United Nations Humanitarian Security Police, created by the General Assembly and composed of specially trained volunteer policewomen and men ready and authorised by their national Police authorities to form into such UN units and move within one week outright. Again and again in the recent crises, if we had had such a Humanitarian Security Police sent in quickly to protect the human rights of civilians and their relief supplies, the need for military forces might have been averted altogether. The Security Council should have a separate, and properly representative standing committee on Humanitarian Security. Every UN operation of any kind should be monitored by an independent Human Rights Ombudsperson.

Wanted : A more vocal and combative South

But it may be asked, what chance do any of these proposals along the spectrum from cause to consequence have unless the powers will agree to them? I am firmly convinced that we in the ordinary world community do not realise what power we have, if we will but mobilise it, in solidarity. We have all been heavily programmed and conditioned to something close to resignation before these fading giants.

First, with very few exceptions, Southern governments are far too polite. I will cite one of the outstanding exceptions, not because we are meeting here but because it simply is the case—Malaysia, its Prime Minister and his fellow-Cabinet members. Diplomats at the UN are all schooled in soft voices, measured phrases, and other traditional niceties that are supposed to lead to congenial negotiation. The trouble is that they don't; all that happens is that the South is again and again kicked in the teeth. Officials in the North who receive such politeness do not respect it; they take it as evidence of the subservience and submissiveness

they seek and expect from developing countries now that their former supporter, the USSR is gone. This politeness also ensures that most decent Northerners do not even learn what really is happening to the South at the hands of the North, because Northern media do not report politeness.

This brings me to a crucial illustration of this syndrome. The bribing or brutal intimidation of economically prostrate member-countries into surrendering their voting rights is an almost totally hidden example of the legacies of impoverishment at work in the South, used like a dagger in the heart of a United Nations that can only survive on the principles of the equal rights of nations large and small.

Again and again in recent years, on any issue judged by the powers to require the obedience of the rest of the world, carefully selected Southern governments are informed that if they do not vote the right way in the Security Council, or if they do not at least abstain or stay silent, they will lose aid, not get debt relief, not get sound credit-rating through the IMF, even not get emergency IMF credit to pay last month's oil bill.

In the Northern school of "realism" this is called "hard ball diplomacy". Its real name is of course extortion; it is a criminal offence in democracies, and it is a criminal violation of the UN Charter.

In 1991, in the immediate aftermath of the particularly vicious use of this disguised form of state terrorism to create the facade of United Nations support for the Gulf War "coalition", the South tabled a resolution in the General Assembly condemning the economic coercion of developing countries for political purposes. It was one of the most ominous indications of the North-South divide, that the entire North voted against this resolution. But both its tabling, and the resultant vote, were treated so softly by the South that to this day not one in a hundred thousand decent Northerners even knows of it.

The South should become far more vocally combative on all fronts. The postures of the Northern powers and their Northern worshippers are arrogant but they are also inconsistent and often racist, and can be shown to be. Let me quickly give an example.

Again and again, the South lets the North get away with claiming a right to special influence in the UN on the grounds of who "contributes most" to the budget. This was one of the demands behind the

treaty-violating refusal of the US Congress to pay full dues, keeping the organization on the brink of bankruptcy, until today the United States owes the UN—and thus all other members—$1.5 billion, equivalent to half the UN's entire operating costs for a year, or some two-thirds its current peace-keeping costs.

The system of assessed contributions to the budget of the UN (and the main Agencies) was fully accepted by all the founding members including the United States. It is grounded in the democratic principle of relative capacity to pay. This fundamental precept of democratic revenue-raising and governance holds that, since it is as difficult for the poorer citizen to find his or her smaller money amount of tax as it is for the wealthier citizen or corporation to find larger money amounts, the wealthier should not have any special voice or voting strength in government.

In the United Nations System, it is at least as difficult for Jamaica, or my country Ireland, or Tanzania to find their smaller money amount of assessed dues as it is for, say, Germany or the United States to find their larger money amount. The whole original idea was thus that everyone "pays most" to the UN, and no one should have special influence, just as the wealthier citizens and corporations in democracies do not have extra votes, or reserved cabinet posts, or the right to withhold their taxes for political reasons. When I recently reminded a Northern audience of this democratic principle behind UN financing and governance, afterwards a Northern Ambassador present came up to me and said, "You know, I have never realised that point; you are absolutely right; it needs to be said more often."

Above all we should use majority power in the General Assembly and restore its original function as the prime policy-making organ of the UN. We need an alert solidarity, so that any weak country threatened with economic damage if it does not comply with an instruction from one of the powers can feel safe to expose the threatened blackmail because the majority will publicly expose and loudly denounce it, if necessary closing down the Assembly until the threat is withdrawn.

We must overcome the debilitating psychological effect of the veto and remember that it does not exist in the Assembly and is in any case only a power against something. For example, the powers can indeed

veto a nomination for Secretary-General, but they cannot get their candidate appointed without the majority in the Assembly. The South should put the powers on notice that they will reject and reject again any candidate for Secretary-General who does not have the full and carefully considered confidence of the real representatives of humankind, whose chief public servant she or he will be.

I did say "she or he", because it is time for an eminently qualified woman to lead us.

Hope for the future of the UN

In conclusion, then, the United Nations is indispensable to the future of world peace and justice, and to the avoidance of an apocalyptic confrontation between the North and South; but we could lose it to gradual decline and eventual collapse, unless we really make it our own and fight for it.

Imperialism has always been 95 per cent psychological bluff and 5 percent periodic massacre. We have nothing to lose but our chains of psychological intimidation, what Chandra Muzaffar has called "the captive mind", dominance. Let us begin shouting from this day forward until the tired and myopic elites are deafened into final retirement from their pompous strutting upon a world stage they have already set burning under their very feet.

Lenin remarked on hearing of the 1916 Proclamation of the Republic in Ireland that it was the first crack in the walls of empire.

If that was so, the second crack was the proclamation of the United Nations Charter.

The third and final one will be made by our proclamation that the vast, vast majority of humankind have had enough, and that we are going to use what is our United Nations at last to implement its noble goals of world community, of the equal rights of nations large and small and the human rights —all the human rights, collective as well as individual—of all our sisters and brothers, everywhere.

Hegemony, Human Rights and Individualism

M. Iqbal Asaria

Many years ago as a fresh graduate of economics, I was deliberating on the idea of the "Third World". Having come from a colonised society, I was acutely aware of the pernicious and oppressive nature of colonialism, and needed little persuasion to espouse the struggle of the oppressed. However, it was the rationale for and the nature of any such struggle which now preoccupied my thinking.I reasoned that the term "Third World" could only be defined in relation to the "First" and the "Second" worlds—it was a residual derived from the definition of "the Other". Delving deeper, it became clear that it was more than a benign residual—the whole definition seemed to circumscribe and define the struggle of the oppressed and the colonised.

Two features of the formulation of the "Third World" concept were central to this realisation. Firstly, the "Third World" was that part of the world which did not *yet* belong to the "First" or the "Second" worlds. By implication, the primary preoccupation of the citizens of the "Third World" was to attain "First" or "Second" world status. This, indeed, was the root of the classic modernisation theory thrust down every economics undergraduate's throat. The second feature, which is not immediately apparent, was that this residual category labelled as the "Third World" accounted for rather more than five-sixths of humanity. Thus, the whole struggle of the bulk of humanity was postulated as a slavish and docile aping of the minority!

In terms of political dynamics, it was not difficult to figure out that anybody who did not toe this line was in for a rough time. What if a country or a people did not want to become like or live like the citizens of the "First" or the "Second" worlds?

The erstwhile colonial masters could neither conceive of such a possibility nor condone it for fear of the contagion spreading and jeopardising the neat neo-colonial eploitative order which was rapidly

taking shape. For the people of the "Third World" the "end of history" had come way before the collapse of Soviet-style communism had even been signalled.

Further reflection also made it clear that the basic thesis of the possibility of attaining "First" world status for the whole of humanity was inherently untenable. The privileges of the minority were derived from the exploitation of the majority and could not be universalised without severely diluting them to the point of non-privileges. The hostile reception given to the movement for the New International Economic Order (NIEO) and to efforts to make the international information gathering and dissemination regime more accountable, only serve to illustrate this construct. Subsequent attempts to even talk about areas like "the right to development" have been thwarted. The underlying dynamic of the "Third World" concept was thus flawed and its political import was to act as a palliative circumscribing struggle for genuine liberation on the part of the oppressed. Collective action to challenge the global political and economic dispensation was proscribed. The collapse of Soviet-style communism added another fillip to the scenario. The triumphalism epitomised by Francis Fukuyama's "End of History" symbolises the civilisational and cultural arrogance which is the logical conclusion of the hegemony of the West.

However, since those reflections in the early seventies, much water has flown under the bridge. The resurgence of Islam in Muslim societies demanding a distinct political space in the international arena, the collapse of Soviet-style communism and its aftermath, and the growing economic power and assertiveness of the non-OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries are a few of the momentus phenomena which are creating mounting tensions in the post-war edifice of Western global hegemony. As a direct corrollary, the dominant cultural, political and economic paradigm which underpinned, rationalised and institutionalised this hegemony is also coming under increasing critical scrutiny. In the realm of *realpolitik*, during the period of superpower rivalry, all kinds of justifications were proferred for hypocritical behaviour on the part of the champions of global morality. Thus, backing of oppressive regimes, proscribing of struggles for freedom and liberation and complete disregard for the consequences of their actions on the oppressed, were commonplace. The rights of the

oppressed figured only when a recalcitrant regime or leader was to be made to toe the line!

The "New World Order" of a unipolar global dispensation was said to be free from these constraints of *realpolitik* and could afford some genuine universalisation of political, cultural and economic space. The shameful unfolding tragedy of Bosnia, the wrangle to monopolise value-added global trade through the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations, the shameless creation of markets for the pursuit of arms sales by the five permanent members of the Security Council and the condoning of mass oppression in the ex-Soviet Central Asian republics, are but a few pointers to the shape of things to come. To cap it all, struggles to have representative governments which are likely to bring forward forces which are *perceived* to oppose the hegemony of the Western political and economic dispensation, as in the case of Algeria, are being proscribed. The hegemonistic tendencies and the oppressive apparatus to preserve the status quo, it seems, will become more pronounced rather than tempered in favour of genuine accommodation between the peoples of the world.

The human rights debate cannot be divorced from the global context. Western hegemony is always legitimised as a theory of the end of history. Furthermore, any theory of universal human rights can only be reconciled with the notion of historical development if history has already come to an end. This then is the nexus between the Western championing of a universal human rights and the triumphalism of "the end of history".

Increasingly, the human rights debate is being conducted under the rubric of a new polemic according to which resistance to Western hegemony is no longer a resistance to any historical power group but to the universal morality of human rights—it is a rejection not of the prevailing world order but of the human community itself! Surely, the universality of human rights is more of a *political* claim than a *moral* one.

Unfortunately for the West, the square of "universality" cannot be superimposed on the circle of "cultural authenticity and legitimacy". The moral impasse in which humanity finds itself today requires a cure far more radical than the anodyne of human rights. Current charters of human rights do not contain any viable solution to the problem of global injustices or constitute blueprints for a Just World Order. Nor are

any "cross-cultural" approaches going to amount to anything but delusion. After all, what legitimacy does a cross-cultural dialogue carry when "Western" technology and gadgetory has taken the place of religion as "the opium of the people". Unless one believes that goods do not convey ideas, or that cross-cultural dialogue is a matter of trading ideas not goods, or that cultural exchange is merely a one-sided transfer, one must see the moral futility of a "dialogue" in an unjust and hegemonistic world such as ours. Further, the present charters of human rights do not say anything about the "rights of humanity" or "rights of nature" because such a discourse would be subversive of the whole ethos of industrial and post-industrial society.

The fundamental problem with the idea of human rights is that it is based on a misreading of Man's political nature. For if everyone is gratuitously assured of certain rights (privileges?), then what point is there in collective *political* struggle by which, our human experience shows, rights are wrested from those in power? And most virile nations would rather be donors than recipients of human rights. Further, only by political action do we make history to submit to our will. Must we, then, accept current charters on human rights as a *fait accompli* and be swallowed by the Western myth of universal history? Must our global morality be merely an extension of the Western *realpolitik*? Or, expressed in traditional rhetoric, must the oppressed, in facing the human rights tribunal, renounce their right to political struggle and to cultural and existential autonomy? Indeed, must they dream of a Just World Order and discard their own myth of "End of History".

The positing of human rights in an exclusively individual context also poses a problematic dichotomy between state and society by disregarding the political and social context of the rights situation and taking no notice of the communal moorings of the individual. This is articulated by Leo Strauss who says, "Liberalism stands or falls by the distinction between state and society or by the recognition of a private sphere, protected by law but impervious to the law, with the understanding, that above all, religion as particular religion belongs to the private sphere. Just as certainly as the liberal state will not "discriminate" against its Jewish citizens, so it is constitutionally unable and even unwilling to prevent "discrimination" against Jews by individuals and groups. To recognise the private sphere in the sense indicated means to permit

"private discrimination", to protect it and thus in fact to foster it. The liberal state cannot provide a solution to the Jewish problem, for such a solution would require a legal prohibition against every kind of "discrimination", i.e. the abolition of the private sphere, the denial of the difference between state and society, the destruction of the liberal state.

Unfortunately, what was once the Jewish problem, is now the Muslim problem. Liberal European states accord full citizenship rights to their Muslim populations, liberal civil societies persecute them. Similarly, the liberal world-order treats Muslim states as outcasts and pariahs. It is high time that we realise that human rights talk is power talk.

Human rights are cherished by all, and notions of establishing humane societies and limiting tyranny and arbitrary rule can be easily shared across humanity. However, the idea of a global morality emanating from a universal human rights paradigm based on a singularly individualistic mooring, and taking its primary inspiration from the perpetrators of a hegemonistic world order, belongs to the realm of misplaced triumphalism. The unfolding catastrophe in Bosnia is a severe jolt for the human conscience and calls for much introspection on the whole human rights enterprise. Any viable human rights paradigm must contain within it the possibilities of realising more than one version of history—otherwise it will remain as the "glorified" trappings of a hegemonistic order.

As newer players gain political and economic prominence, the dominant individual-centred human rights paradigm will need to evolve. Individual rights will need to be balanced by communal and societal rights and globally the human rights practice will have to be stripped of its hegemonistic moorings.

*I am greatly indebted to my close friend and one of the most perceptive Muslim exponents of the subject, S Parvez Manzoor, for the development of many of the ideas contained in this paper. I have also borrowed liberally from his excellent series of articles on the human rights issue during the last two years.

Human Rights and Western Dominance

Ashis Nandy

Everyone knows that we live in a world dominated by what we call the "West". Everyone also knows that "West" is an inaccurate, misleading term. At one time, more appropriately, we used the term "Europe", but it became rather clear after World War II that, in the sense the Asians and Africans had used the term "Europe" for more than a century, "Europe" no longer had the same meaning or political-geographical focus. For the concept of Europe now had to include a non-European power on the other side of the Atlantic which had, in the Afro-Asian sense again, become more European than Europe itself.

The mainstream intelligentsia then switched to the term "advanced capitalist countries". Indeed, for at least two entire generations that term not only described the global hegemony of the West but also summarized a theoretical understanding of it. Leninist writings on imperialism were the Bible of our intellectual uncles when we were in our youth. Few noticed that the theory, whatever else it did or did not, further homogenized the world. While the "advanced capitalist countries" dominated the global political economy on behalf of the West, the world's first socialist state and its ideologues dominated dissent on behalf of the West. The world was getting totalized, well before the fear of that totalization infected many Third World nationalists.

Simultaneously, Asian and African societies were losing their claims to distinctiveness, at least for the elites of these societies. After the rather quick and unbecoming demise of the Bandung spirit, what bound together these countries was their common status in the global political economy. Though the Third World was universally acknowledged to be third-class, there was enough scope for promotion within that global system—from the status of poor countries to underdeveloped or less developed societies, to developing or, in some cases, newly developed

economies, to correspond to the European concept of the newly rich. Indeed, as the citizens of some of these countries broke through the barriers set by their poverty lines or escaped from the poverty trap, their bulging national waist lines were acknowledged and sometime even officially so, as for instance, when the Japanese were given the status of honorary whites by South African's much maligned apartheid regime. The game of playing "us" versus "them"—we, the coloured Eastern people and they, the white Europeans—was becoming more and more difficult. Our rulers now included a more than modest sprinkling of people looking like them.

Against this backdrop has entered the issue of human rights in the world stage. At one time these rights were what people like the South African freedom fighters and some heroes of freedom struggles in Asia and Africa—such as Jawaharlal Nehru in India—talked about. The West then talked about the long-term prospects of human freedom being jeopardized by romantic, Utopian talk of human rights. Those at the capital of world democracy were then, as a matter of habit, putting up one tinpot despot after another close to its borders, in South America. The reigning perception of world politics then was that, for a South American, African or Asian, it was better to be dead—in the hands of their native despots—than to be red. For if you went red, you could still be dead, but, in addition, your country became permanently inaccessible to the global market and media that went by the name of the "free world".

Other realistic considerations were also involved. The "mature" democratic states disliked democracies at their peripheries. Democracy, even minimally defined in terms of civil rights, free press and adult franchise means "muddle" and chaos, and large democracies, which invariably have enough complexities within their borders, hate to deal with additional complexities outside. For instance, mouthing slogans about liberty, equality and fraternity, France worked hard in Africa to replicate the record of the United States in South America and Asia. And the so-called immature democracies have always faithfully learnt from their elders, and better. The gut reaction of some like President Richard Nixon, who consistently felt more comfortable with the somewhat flamboyant Latin juntas that made the remote-control of their countries easy for the American establishment, did not remain a gut

reaction when it came to Third World regimes learning statecraft from these worthies. Likewise, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and the Indian foreign office bureaucracy, for instance, always found it easier to live with the likes of General Zia-ul-Haque with his toothy smile and General H.M. Ershad, ever ready to mouth bad poetry like a true Bengali to get out of difficult political situations, than with clumsy, chaotic democratic neighbours.

Times have changed. The same global forces that underwrote the Duvalier regime, the Syngman Rhees, the Pinochets and South Africa's racist rulers, to ensure their survival beyond all reasonable limits of decency, have now turned to give the recalcitrant Haitians a lesson in both democracy and in philanthropic international intervention. No wonder that nearer home, our indigenous despots and ambitious generals are nervous. They know what has been happening to their kind elsewhere in the world, thanks to their one-time patrons. The demands of the global politics of information and the local politics of public opinion, both heavily dependent on media, have changed dramatically.

The politics of human rights is polarized by the pulls of this globalization, on the one hand, and the attempts by the indigenous police states or "controlled democracies" to discredit local demands for human rights as the catspaw of global powers, on the other. If you are effective within your country, the regime and coercive apparatus of the state come to hate you and try to discredit you as a traitor or, if you are lucky, as a romantic visionary available free of cost to the enemies of the country. More so, if your work has a bearing on the broad area of national security or impinges on development policies, if you, for instance, work for an anti-nuclear movement or join an environmental group demonstrating against a missile-testing site. Given that in many Third World countries national security and development issues are first of all clandestine and not so clandestine ways of making demands on state sovereignty. Complicit or foolish journalists and political analysts, having a romantic vision or driven by considerations of *realpolitik*, worsen the situation.

As in all stories involving global actors, there are, here too, many sub-plots and sub-plots within sub-plots. The one which promises to spin out a new soap opera in the area of human rights is the old divide between Western and non-Western human rights activists. And the

story is not going to be any different from other such stories involving Western and non-Western radicalism, Western and and non-Western capitalism, Western and non-Western environmentalism or feminism. The non-Western human rights bodies have often thought of Western human rights bodies as culturally myopic and self-righteous. The Western human rights bodies consider their non-Western brethren in exactly the way their ruling regimes think of the Third World states—as apprentices who need to learn but who sometimes have, by cutting corners, become more successful than their Western counterparts. As more and more funds flow to the Western human rights organisations, thanks to the growing interests of the Western political-economic establishment in human rights issues, the NGOs that were once in the dog house for opposing the likes of Pinochet, are flush with funds and easy with denunciations of Third World savagery. As with the 19th century evangelists and educationists in Asia and Africa, the cultural and intellectual arrogance of these groups is now backed by the feeling that the imperial power of the Western states is behind them.

On the other hand, the Third World NGOs working in the area of human rights have also tasted blood. True, in many instances they will prefer not to be encumbered by the support of fishy Western human rights NGOs with close links with Western regimes, but it is also true that they never were effective politically as now, when Western press and public opinion are keen to pick up stories which no one was willing to listen to earlier. Compare the Indian government's early dismissive responses to human rights reports and even documentary films on the use of child labour in matchbox factories and carpet-manufacturing with its more recent discomfort when the use of child labour in carpet-manufacturing is used as a justification for restricting imports of Indian carpets to the West. If you want a more weighty example, compare the casualness with which the Indian establishment treated the accusation of Indian human rights activists that all elections in Kashmir had been systematically rigged by the Indian state—except the one held during the brief tenure of the much hated, "conservative" prime minister Mr. Morarji Desai—with their new-found enthusiasm to defend the human rights record of the Indian army and paramilitary forces in Kashmir. An excellent example is my friend George Verghese, a Gandhian and human rights activist, who has an enviable record of supporting the

Indian establishment when it comes to the trampling of human rights in the name of the right kind of slogans—national unity, development and scientific rationality.

Simultaneously, an enormous chasm has opened up between human rights activism directed against the kind of violence that comes from the sources that the 19th century has made us self-conscious about and the type of violence that emanates from new sources of violence to which we prefer to remain blind, because they are hitched to ideas that we have yet to learn to be sceptical about. We easily forget that this century has produced both Nazism, which used the idiom of eugenics and social Darwinism, and Leninism, which used the slogan of scientific history. We love to believe that Nazism was all about racism, and Leninism all about class hatred.

So human rights issues when raised in the context of ethnic violence, fundamentalism, electoral malpractices, and racism have one kind of run in public affairs. And human rights issues when raised in the context of threats to national security, scientific research and development have another kind of run. The same human rights activists who go purple in the face when speaking of electoral malpractices can go out of their way to buy the government's version of the story when it comes to national security or resitance to mega-dams or illegal testing of drugs.

Human Rights and the Dominance Pattern in the West: Deforming Outlook, Deformed Practices

Richard Falk

Preliminary Observations

One of the most harmful features of global dominance, Western-style, is the perpetual rediscovery of its own "innocence". No amount of abuse and exploitation, however catastrophic its consequences for the non-Western victims, seems able to erode this sense of innocence to any degree. The United States, as governed and as popularly oriented, is especially immune to "second thoughts" or "self-criticism". It retains its sense of self as "the last best hope" of humanity, as "the city on the hill", "the new Jerusalem", all expressions of noble intentions and the highest expectations. Yet despite the experiences with the dispossession of the indigenous peoples of North America, with slavery and its aftermath, with Hiroshima and Vietnam, the innocence remains untarnished.

This basic self-affirmation seems oblivious, as well, to the scandals of homelessness, urban decay, high homicide rates that now so strongly afflict American society. Americans, leaders and citizens alike, especially on matters of human rights, believe they have much to teach, and little to learn. There are exceptions, of course, who call attention to past or present wrongdoing, and serve the country as critics. Except, however, in periods of self-doubt as in the late 1960s during the latter stages of the Vietnam War, these critical voices are not welcome, and not widely heard, and not at all heeded.

Such a pattern of cultural denial is enforced from above and below as in the recent controversy about whether the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. should have an exhibit on the use of atomic bombs at the end of World War II, casting doubt after 50 years on the official

claims of "military necessity", showing the suffering and devastation caused by the explosions and radiation, and posing the question as to whether the real motives were not hatred of and revenge against Japan and intimidation of the Soviet Union. After veterans groups protested, politicians responded, and the Smithsonian exhibit was effectively cancelled, consisting now only of the surviving fuselage of the plane that delivered the first atomic bomb, unaccompanied by commentary or pictures of the human consequences.

Let me begin by distancing myself from this dominant, ultimately self-destructive American viewpoint, and to do so, by suggesting how important this conference is as a learning experience for me, as one Westerner from the United States who counts himself as among those critical voices who are tolerated, but confined to the margins of political life. I have come to realise that despite my progressive credentials as a student of international relations, and despite frequent stands in opposition to the policies of the US Government, I find myself, to a significant extent, a captive of the human rights discourse that is most easily reconcilable with the current patterns of global dominance, especially as this discourse has unfolded in the United States. It is very difficult to become disengaged from the distorting misconceptions that are part of the deep structures of this discourse, as these are hidden below the level of consciousness, unless deliberately and forcefully articulated as this conference has succeeded brilliantly in doing from its inception. The emancipatory impact of our discussions here in Kuala Lumpur are evident in three clusters of issues that have been depicted here to varying degrees and from several distinct perspectives.

- The crucial case of conceiving of responsibilities as correlative to rights; I have been reading and writing about human rights for more than 30 years and this crucial insight has never effectively before penetrated my consciousness. I am now ready to collaborate in a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities as an indispensable companion to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Western discourse on human rights works within invisible boundaries associated with self-expression and resistance to authority—(the individualist ethos that gives rise to consumer absolutism and all forms of permissiveness) and without any sense of responsibility to the well-being and needs of the community. Protecting the individual is a great advance over its

absolutist antecedents, but it needs to be balanced by the acknowledgement that the individual is embedded within a community. The importance of placing limits upon human assertiveness at all levels of social organization is overlooked if the stress is placed only on the protection of individuals.

• My second cluster of issues arises from the Western presumption that secularism is a necessary precondition for a tolerant society, a viewpoint that tends to regard a secure environment for human rights to be inconsistent with the embodiment of religious conviction in public policy and political leaders. Here in Malaysia, I have begun to appreciate the extent to which the governance of a country could be, at once, Islamic and tolerant. The character of the Malaysian state is, thus, a double challenge to the contemporary belief structure of Western human rights discourse: first of all, the realisation that the fusion of religious and political authority may under some circumstances contribute to, rather than undermine, tolerance to those of different race, religion, as well as to strangers, and what is more, and harder still for Western discourse to acknowledge, is that Islam may exert an influence on the leadership of a country to exhibit tolerance toward non-Islamic minorities, rather than being a ground for repression and intolerance. Of course, any degree of historical consciousness would acknowledge that the past record of interreligious and interethnic tolerance in the Muslim world far exceeds that in the West, perhaps most spectacularly with respect to anti-Semitism.

• My third cluster was highlighted by an aspect of Prime Minister Mahathir's speech, his reference to human rights NGOs from the West as vehicles of dominance. In much of our Western discourse, progressives such as myself have drawn a distinction between the state as essentially an agent of globalism-from-above and human rights NGOs as agents of a counter-hegemonic globalism, a liberating globalism-from-below, essentially democratising force. Yet, this sharp distinction does not hold up. On reflection, I agree with the critique of human rights NGOs in the West as agents of a one-sided conception of human rights that reinforces patterns of global dominance. I had previously been critical of the mainstream Western NGO approach that shared the statist view in the West that the programmatic content of human rights consisted only of political and civil rights and could not be meaningfully extended to

economic and social rights, despite the treatment of both categories of rights as equivalent under international law, and despite the greater relevance of economic and social rights to the lives of most people on the planet. But the critique of this human rights discourse needs to go even further, and extend beyond these matters of substantive emphasis. It is time for the West to realise that unless rights are balanced by a framework of responsibilities, "freedoms" are likely to degenerate into societal decadence; to be dedicated to forms of secularism not transcended by a spiritual sense of human identity is to deprive our political and moral imaginations of the only reliable basis for overcoming the contradictions of modernism.

Let me emphasise that I am not uncritically endorsing official Malaysian views in the domain of human rights, which disclose a tendency to offer rationalisations for a posture designed to shield abusive or dubious practices of government with respect to opponents, including deviant religious groups. I am rather trying to underscore the central point that we in the West are often complicit in our deployment of human rights concepts and thinking, that we need to see the discourse on human rights from without in order to appreciate its limitations and distortions. Enabling us in the West to conceive of ourselves from without is part of why a conference of this sort is both distinctive and valuable. Such a view from without does not involve any suspension of critical assessment, or worse, an exoneration of arbitrary or oppressive laws, but it does put the focus more directly on Western contributions to human suffering as a consequence of its role in constructing and maintaining dominance structures. Praising the achievements of Malaysia with respect to ethnic pluralism is quite consistent with lamenting the condition and status of women in Malaysia, which currently fails to meet either international legal standards or those generated by the Islamic tradition.

This view from without, which is in effect, a reflection in the mirror of Asian thought and practice, encourages Western self-criticism. This interplay is additional to the impacts of global patterns of dominance on those dominated, the distortions of priorities, the deprivations carried on over long stretches of time, and the deformations of cultural identity in non-Western societies being produced by Western modes of popular culture and consumerism. A government may reasonably have to

infringe upon freedom of expression to protect a country from such baleful influences.

Let me now focus on "Western social reality" as a dimension of "global domination". I share Ashis Nandy's essential claim that "the West" is no longer a geographic space, but has its locus in those non-territorial and largely non-accountable global market forces that represent the new locus of geopolitics, setting the agenda in matters of political economy for even the most powerful states by establishing the priorities for global policy, especially on matters of peace and security. In this regard, upholding Western control over oil in the Gulf was worth a major war, but protecting Bosnia or Rwanda from genocide is worth only the meekest gestures of concern, and protecting thè Chechens from Russian violence is not even worth a gesture of condemnation. The impact of this ascendancy of market forces is to reduce the sense of alternatives available to leaders at the level of the state. At risk, in particular, are compassionate approaches to poverty and social vulnerability. The impact of the globalised market produces a narrowing of political space available to the governments of "the West". This is true even for the most powerful states.

The imperative of "competitiveness" drives down wages and safety measures, as well as rolls back welfare. Particularly revealing in this period is the collapse of "social democracy" as a more compassionate approach to market approaches. Whether it is the French "socialism" of Mitterrand, the tilt toward Wall Street by "the new Democrats" in the Clinton presidency, the realignment of the British Labour Party and the Japanese Socialist Party, and the move away from the welfare state in Scandinavia, the story is the same. It is evident that "social democracy" must now submit to the market rather than pursue its own programme of action; it seems as if politics is becoming capital-driven rather than people-driven. It is a structural story. And it is one that renders elections and political parties of less and less consequence, creating a crisis for constitutional democracy in the West. Until these global market forces can be regulated on the basis of human priorities, including environmental effects, the dynamics of trade, investment and growth are likely to produce many cruel results, quite inconsistent with the mission of human rights to protect everyone, especially those who are most at risk economically, socially, politically, and culturally.

This set of circumstances is aggravated by the degree to which human rights in the West is dangerously captive of an outmoded and self-destructive human rights discourse—namely, deference to the autonomy of market forces and a refusal to challenge the consequences of secularism in its post-modern forms, with its strong connections to consumerism and its propagation of a mood of despair (of the sort Jeremy Seabrook depicts so vividly). In the most minimal sense this means that the West refuses to acknowledge that conditions of widespread "homelessness", permanent joblessness, urban squalor, drug culture, crime and the commercialisation of violence are posing human rights challenges of an urgent character, as well as "law and order" problems. The inspiration for the UN Social Development Summit, to be held in Copenhagen during March 1995, was a response to this neglect, designed to insert these concerns back on to the political agenda of states, and to reshape the human rights agenda in light of these developments. Unfortunately, the Summit has been severely constrained by the political need to win the support of governments, which means not to attack, and therefore not to expose, the role of global market forces as responsible for some of the worst patterns of social abuse.

As earlier mentioned, Western social reality is alienated from its own criminal past to an alarming degree, and therefore encompassed by it. This is especially true of the United States, which was quite pathologically expressed by the recent plan by the US postal service to issue a stamp celebrating the 50th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with the astonishing and blandly shocking caption "atomic bombs that saved lives". Japanese protests have led to a White House decision to rescind the stamp, evidently in response to intense Japanese pressure whose effectiveness reflected mainly Japan's role as major trading partner and as a crucial member of G-7. President Clinton's request of the US Postal Service to cancel the stamp did not arise because the US Government was suddenly willing to confront the criminality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or even to challenge the post-Cold War military utility of nuclear missiles. We can imagine the sense of indignation and outrage that would follow in the US if Germany issued a stamp "interpreting" its concentration camps in a self-serving way, possibly a picture of Auschwitz with the caption "Overcoming the humiliation of Versailles". But is it so different?! This criminality of the West includes the

genocidal ordeal of indigenous peoples who stood in the way of colonial conquerors, it extends to the horrifying reliance on slavery as the basis of "economic development" in the New World, as well as related to the deprivations and humiliations of the colonial era and to the continuing, contemporary appropriations of the wealth of the poor for the benefit of the superior-rich resulting in the ecological plunder of the planet in a manner persuasively described by Vandana Shiva.

The aspect of this refusal by the West to perceive its own role in generating abuses arises from "the otherness" of the focus; that is, human rights are mainly for others, especially those in the South. Whether it is a matter of government policy or academic literature, the Western, particularly the United States, emphasis is on human rights as an instrument of foreign policy, not as a corrective to domestic shortcomings. Recently, this has made human rights a central dimension of intervention debates associated with Haiti and elsewhere, inquiries into whether the humanitarian cause is a worthwhile basis of foreign policy. This self-righteous diplomacy is producing a new crusader mentality that underpins the advocacy of humanitarian intervention, the geographic axis of which is always North-South, with no contemplation that perhaps there are circumstances of abuse that might validate South-North forms of intervention. At the same time, where the cause is perceived as mainly humanitarian, as in Bosnia or Chechnya, there is little willingness to take the necessary steps.

There is a peculiarly distorting tendency in the current controversies about whether to exclude human rights concerns from economic interactions between the West and the countries of Asia. The source of the distortion is the "innocence" of the West, oblivious to its own historical role in the region. In this regard, for the US Government to pretend to act recently as the natural agent for the promotion of human rights in China and Indonesia given the colonial legacy of abuse is hardly credible. The post-colonial approach has delivered a clear double-message to Asian countries: be decent the way we are but, above all, grow quickly; in effect, become like us, that is, be rich, consumerist, and abusive, but don't worry about the human consequences. Revealingly, the predatory capitalism of East Asia is called "a miracle", overlooking the extent to which management-worker relations remind one of many features similar to the worst excesses of early capitalism in the West (pre-Marx, pre-labour movement, pre-safety and minimum age and wage laws).

This observation does not mean to deny that the economic development of the last few decades for the countries in this region has been remarkable, and beneficial for many people. At the same time, harnessing energies for such a goal, relying on private capital, poses risks. Those who are vulnerable need protection. The goodwill and sense of responsibility of entrepreneurs is not enough. Only a combination of vigilance by government and democratic social forces can create a balance between the logic of the market and the ethos of humane social conditions. The regional and global scale of the market requires that this balance be struck at an international level so that all societies within a given region would be competing on the basis of common ground rules.

This relative play of forces can be explored by comparing US policy towards China with that towards Haiti. With China, as was predictable, global market forces would deter the US Government from pushing too hard on human rights as China was a trading partner of increasing importance. In contrast, when US intellectual property rights were at risk, then even a trade war was threatened to induce Chinese co-operation.

In relation to Haiti, market forces contributed differently to the formation of policy: intervene to restore Jean-Bertrand Aristide if this is the only way to stop the flow of unwanted Haitian refugees into the United States, but do so in a manner that doesn't revive his populist programme for the Haitian poor. Respect the almost 80% electoral mandate Aristide's programme received from the citizens of Haiti, but make Aristide swallow the IMF economic austerity pill and adopt an approach to development that makes it impossible to implement economic policies designed to mitigate poverty. Further, to be sure that Aristide has no second thoughts, keep the brutal paramilitary FRAPH of the old military regime in being and armed, ready to step in again if Aristide should return to a politics based on a vision of social justice.

Not all is bleak. There have been signs that this domineering, selective, and hypocritical approach to human rights in the West is being powerfully challenged both by social forces within these countries and those without. Some recent instances are encouraging:

• Indigenous peoples in 1992 displayed a new strength, and spoiled plans for celebrating Columbus' 500th anniversary of plunder and exploitation as a high point of Western civilisation

• Women have emerged as a global emancipatory force, managing to reshape the agenda and outcome at the UN Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994, exhibiting some possibilities for the emergence of global democracy. Women's groups emphasised improving the condition of women, especially educating girls, as more critical than restraining fertility, if the goal was to relieve demographic pressures.

Conclusions

1. It is critical at this time to embark upon a critique of the Western human rights paradigm as integral to the rethinking process, in effect, the sort of re-evaluation proposed by Chandra Muzaffar in his opening remarks.

2. An important aspect of such rethinking is to establish the connection between a regulatory framework of global and regional market forces and the safeguarding of human rights in the social and economic realm.

3. A positive conception of the human future is needed that combines tolerance, even the celebration of diversity, with a reconstruction of the social and cultural order so as to endow the individual and collective identity of humanity with spiritual significance.

4. The interplay of different cultural and religious traditions suggests the importance of multi-civilisational dialogue involving participation of various viewpoints, especially by those with non-Western orientations. We need, not a clash or merger of civilisations, but to avoid such tensions, attitudes of mutual respect and conciliation.

Some Thoughts on an Alternative to the Imperium of Human Rights

Ziauddin Sardar

The dominant view of universal human rights is that it is a coherent body of ideals and supranational legislation that operates consistently to generate a form of civil society that secures for the individual the guaranteed enjoyment of a liberal life-style without intimidation and beholden to none. So far so good. But such a statement, while palpably true, takes us only so far.

It is necessary to test the quality of such a statement. Who are these people; what is the quality of the life they lead; what is the nature of the system of civil society in which they enjoy their complement of universal rights? Such questions lead on to a very obvious answer. To enjoy the gamut of the universal umbrella of human rights you have to be white, affluent (even when by Western standards you are on lower pay scales) and live in Europe, North America or one of the European settler colonies dotted around the globe. If you qualify on all these grounds and do not espouse an eccentric religious or political persuasion (though these should also be secured as your liberated right) you have the full measure of civic beatitude under the imperium of universal human rights. Well, that accounts for less than the 17%, or one-sixth, as we have been relentlessly restating, of the world's population—so what about the rest of humankind?

The last great popular revolt designed to make the minimal conditions of the universal human rights panacea apply within the so-called premier democracy on earth took place within living memory—indeed, I vividly recall following its progress on daily television, courtesy of BBC. It was only as recently as 1968 that this centuries-long campaign for civic

inclusion and humane acceptance took its last most noted martyr, Martin Luther King, Jr. It had to that point accumulated many nameless martyrs subjected to the entire battery of humiliations and persecutions of which human pathology is capable, for daring to desire to be deemed equal human beings. The campaign by African Americans for practical participation in the imperium of human rights is a clear demonstration that ideal and practice are not near neighbours, that rhetorical flourish and wholehearted commitment can turn a vicious blind eye to wholesale abuse of principle on its own doorstep. The *volte face* is even easier the further one's blind eye wanders from home.

Inconsistencies

It might perhaps have behoved the vocal upholders of universal human rights to have concentrated on setting their own house in order before they began the long push of imposing their view of universal human rights universally. But idealism has seldom been prepared to be modest and parochial. It makes the sceptic's task of criticism, critique and even demolition easy. We have amassed in this conference sufficient critical mass of practical shortcomings to make the most ennobling appear genuinely sordid. That is a necessary exercise if we are to realign the human rights debate on a more realistic basis that offers genuine inclusion for the five-sixths of humanity who do not automatically qualify at present.

However, simply to say that the dominant conception of universal human rights is shot through with inconsistencies in practice and limited in its application, is about as revealing an insight as saying the sun will probably rise in the East tomorrow—it has been confirmed time and time again by experience. No, what we need is not just critique based on explication of experience but insight that sets the proactive ground work for going beyond the current impasse. We cannot rest content with denouncing what we object to; it is our essential task to delineate what replacement we are for and to engage actively and vociferously in practical undertakings as if that alternative already existed. Such a shift is the path of conscientious commitment to a new worldview of the universal rights of the human condition. We must use the critical mass we have acquired here to launch the search for a universal dialogue (or polylogue) rooted in the same principle of sceptical intellectual and

practical rigour that we use in developing our critique of the Western notions of human rights. That should be our over-riding task now!

This conference has established some basic premises. We have been left with no doubt, if any ever existed, that the dominant view of human rights is an extrapolation of one particular and partial worldview that has been made dominant by the exercise of power acquired through decidedly illiberal means, power that in acquisition, operation and continued existence violates the principles of the Declaration of Universal Human Rights in their totality.

We have also established that the dominant conception of human rights activism takes its cue from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a civil and political agenda, to the detriment of the social and economic charter also adopted by the United Nations. The difference between these two views is that one concerns peoples' rights to secure their daily bread, while the other concerns the nature of the rights to organise the system wherein they arrange to consume their bread in the safe confines of their own homes. We are agreed that in a world of acute poverty and spiralling homelessness, it is securing the needs of the neediest to an adequate provision of sustenance that is the primary, indeed primal, universal right. Without a basic sustainable economic subsistence, civic and political rights have no meaning, the very conditions of scratching the earth for existence preclude enjoyment of and exclude people from the imperium of the dominant agenda of human rights.

However, this basic needs dictum is not an alternative to a larger view of human rights, one that includes civic and political rights. We are not dealing with an either or equation. There must be a balance, the balanced perspective that all too often has been missing in the operation of practical politics on both national and international levels when it comes to taking action to enhance the quality of life and basic needs provision for the neediest.

It is at this point that we need to step back and reassess the linkages between the philosophy and the view of history that underpins the dominant view of human rights and the nexus of power that it employs to maintain and so operate the realities of the world that human rights activism can end up collaborating with the malign structures that keep the poor poor and the marginal marginalised.

Omission

In making an alternative critique this conference has committed a number of major sins of omission, and a few of commission. We have invoked alternative perspectives incessantly, but we have signally failed to define what they are, or to expound them in detail or to question how they would make the actual conditions and concerns of five-sixths of humanity different in practice in today's world. There are some very good reasons for this diplomatic silence. The actual frameworks of indigenous views of humanity from which are derived our views of the essential rights and duties, freedoms and obligations of individuals, families, communities and polities exist only in history. They have all been marginalised in the making of the world in which we live and this marginalisation has profoundly affected our own understanding of our own traditions, it has also afflicted our ability to call upon these systems as pragmatic alternatives or to reason through our indigenous sources for practicable answers. The alternatives exist only in theory, and the theory is very often overlaid with the obscurantism of history, a history we have been hijacked from, prevented from living through by the power of the imperium.

This silence squarely and honestly places us in the middle of our own worst nightmare—that when we consign ourselves to our own indigenous alternatives we simply do not know where we stand, what we stand for, who or what we stand with or against and often feel we are being co-opted to defend the indefensible.

I feel this dilemma acutely as a Muslim writer who has written extensively about Islamic revival and resurgence, who defends the concept of Islamic alternatives as an entire civilizational project which includes a distinct view of human rights and of a system of community "ummatic" organisation for the enjoyment and securing of this set of rights for all people whether Muslim or not, but who nonetheless finds himself unable to see much difference between the Islamic states, and the political movements of would-be makers of Islamic states, on the one hand, and the dominant conventions, on the other—especially when it comes to human rights.

Tradition, civilizational tradition, that defines our distinctness and shapes our identity, that makes us part of the five-sixths of humanity who are marginal to and marginalized by the imperium, is a living

thing. For the Muslims, their civilizational vision derives from an absolute, unchanging source: the Quran and Sunnah. But it is living because the absolute sources only find worldly expression through human commitment and consciousness in time and space. It is the fate of human society to change, for human consciousness to expand or contract, to exhibit both knowledge and ignorance and to be prey to a myriad of interests, concerns and contextual dilemmas which cause people and things to change. The living vibrant tradition of early Islam was a massive human endeavour to translate our absolute sources into a codified system, the intellectual jewel of Islamic civilization is the jurisprudential undertaking that underpins the *shariah*. But today the *shariah* is the dead weight that stands between the Muslim and a living civilizational rebirth as an alternative society.

What is taken as tradition today by Muslims is a fossilised entity, a system of thought, frozen in history. The *shariah* as defended and called for today is a historical accretion, a pile of jewels and debris built up around the immutable principles and guidelines of our absolute sources. What is understood as the *shariah* is not a methodology for answering the ever changing succession of contemporary contextual questions, a methodology that wrestles with the actual problems and conditions in which Muslims live. It is an obscurantist body of arcane answers to the contextual, actual, contemporary problems of our forebears who lived in a world totally different from the one we inhabit. As Muslims we are asked to place on the highest pedestal not the absolute sources on which the believer has no question of validity or authority, but the end product of actual rulings that have accreted over time around these sources on which we should have a multitude of questions and a great deal of doubt as to their validity and authority. The Muslim in the contemporary world also has a vast trove of questions on which little if any attempt has been made to elucidate and elicit ethical principles and moral imperatives of action from our enduring source of values. The *shariah* in its totality has not been operative in any Muslim society for centuries, the *shariah* in its totality is not known to the vast majority of Muslims—thereby offering them no sense of security and certainty in the operation of any so-called Islamic state.

Our alternative to the imperium of human rights must be actualized in contemporary circumstances in ways that are relevant and offer

remedies to our problems. Our tradition is currently in no condition to meet this challenge. This is a conundrum faced not just by the Muslim but is the nightmare faced by many traditional civilizations and worldviews in our plural and culturally diverse world. True, one of the culprits for our inability to wrestle alternatively with the world in which we live is the 500-year history of expanding dominance of just one civilisation and the domineering career of the project of modernity that is its most characteristic product. We are not without instincts, intuitions and intimations of alternatives but we have no lucid, coherent and transparently known system that is ready to be acted upon, enacted in our societies to provide relief, or indeed to be argued as equivalent to the paradigm of the imperium.

Traditionalism

Traditionalism, the dead body that has come to us deformed through history can be a collaborator with the worst excesses of the dominant system. Essentially, the traditionalism we possess fits itself into a political equation of power and domination, hungry to assume control over the instruments of power and authority created by modernity. Thus, we have the fundamentalist movements which yearn to take over the nation-state and exercise all its trappings of power. Thus, we have the political equation of the latent reservoir of hope of the masses of our people being stirred by rhetorical flourishes that are our last best hopes, only to find themselves caught in a cruel pincer movement that marginalises all their hopes for human betterment and the upliftment of their condition in this world. Thus, we have civilizational traditions with inbuilt principles that enable them to exist and operate in a heterodox world, generating rabid political movements based on fundamentalist traditionalism that seek nothing less than unthinking uniformity and exclusivist nation-states where dissent, difference and the exercise of any form of human choice would seem to have no legitimacy, let alone right to exist. This is a problem we can only partially analyse as an historic consequence of colonial deformation. It is in the main a problem of our own creation that only we can resolve.

But how we tackle this problem is itself a problem. Seeking alternatives within Asia means starting with the axioms and assumptions of the traditions and worldviews of Asia, as well as using concepts and

categories of thought and analysis that are intrinsic to our heritage. We cannot develop alternatives by accepting and using the dominant notions of thought and modes of analysis. If the search for Asian alternatives begins with Western assumptions and proceeds with Western conceptual and analytical tools, the end result will simply reaffirm the position of the dominant system of thought. The alternatives, if they actually emerge as alternatives, will be alternatives within, but not to, the Western paradigm. Much of contemporary Muslim reformist thought starts with the acceptance of Western values and superiority of its thought and ends up with models of economic and political alternatives which are either merely appendages to dominant archetypes, or worse, generate new mechanisms of exploitation and oppression with Islamic labels. Or, as is the case with the Sudanese scholar Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim, rather popular in this part of the Muslim world, the acceptance of Western notions of civil liberties and human rights often leads the reforming crusader to the renunciation of much Qur'anic legislation. Alternatives which actually sever our roots from our guiding principles are little more than camouflaged suicide notes.

Just as the dominant conventions of universal human rights coalesced over the centuries as extrapolations from the experience of the religious and political problems of Europe, so our alternative systems, rooted in our diverse living traditions must be actively developed through debate over time. We cannot start with the itemised shopping list of the dominant human rights paradigm and be content to say we have something that approximates to that and proceed on that basis to regard our alternative system through the refractory lens of a historic dynamic that begins from totally different premises to resolve particular problems that have not been ours. We have to go forward to our own sources on their own conceptual terms, we have to negotiate ourselves past the detritus of our own history to recover the categories and conceptual tools that could provide contemporary answers to contemporary problems. For Muslims, this requires working out the contemporary meaning of such fundamental Islamic concepts and values as *adl*, the Quranic concept of justice, or *istislah*, the *shariah* notion of public interest, or *khalifah*, the Islamic ideal of our trusteeship of God's earth, as only some examples from an extensive integrated, interactive list. Other Asian cultures must seek the contemporary meaning and relevance of

their own traditional notions and categories of thought. The procedure for evolving a new and contemporary meaning will be complex and lengthy in all cases. But it is essential if we are to engage in our own alternatives and guarantee the integrity of our own identity as an actual way of living ourselves into our future. We cannot assume that our living traditions will give rise to a unitary system; they can and will if operationalised in contemporary forms, enable our core set of values to generate a diversity of patterns of social formation for the delivery of values to the people. What is supreme in our traditions is the ethical and moral imperatives to make our values actual, not the insistence on the specifics of the forms and means by which this is to be achieved.

We must commence the search for our alternative frameworks of human rights provision in the midst of the other principal problems that afflict Asia. The deformities in our societies are today not the sole responsibility of Big Brother, the Western demon. They are actively enjoined, policed and profited from by whole legions of home grown little big brothers. The legion of little big brothers is not only composed of the obvious political clients and surrogates of the West but also by intellectuals and even businessmen who all have vested interests in the ongoing status quo. We must agree with Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who has repeatedly made the point that we cannot allow the argument for Asian perspectives to be a smokescreen for protecting the failures, foibles and outright abuses that are now home grown by our indigenously cloned offshoots of modernity. The target of our living tradition must not be to sharpen our venom tipped barbs against the West, but to fit ourselves with the principled stance to clean our own house by our own efforts, to begin the creation of a viable, sustainable, domestic environment where all of our people can prosper in the enjoyment of their full rights and dignity as we understand them. That is no cosy doctrine of complacent indulgence for the status quo that afflicts five-sixths of the human race, and especially not for the elites who currently hold power over them in the independent states where they live.

Any genuine movement to enact a living tradition will be assailed from many sides. It will face stern opposition from the entrenched power structures of traditionalism, it will face opposition from the hydra-headed league of little big brothers for whom universalism is their bargaining chip for continued licence to appropriate power and dominance within that which was initially created and operated from

without. Last but not least, it will face opposition and incomprehension from the West. We will learn that the cultural eclecticism of post-modernism is in reality a mask for a potent totalitarianism that regards human rights as its own possession, libertarian values as their special creation whose form and content is not for the products of lesser histories and the out-lying margins to mess around with. We will be told by everyone that we have left the path of light to play with dark powers that risk unleashing demon forces on our societies.

The dynamic of modernity has been the triumph of secularism, because only secular dominance and legislation was deemed capable of protecting the religious freedoms of Western man (Western woman was not part of the debate until very recently; she was a chattel with few rights and no franchise—in stark contrast to the rightful condition of her sisters elsewhere in living tradition after living tradition, though seldom the actual condition of her sisters under the sway of contemporary traditionalism).

Nation-state

The modern concept of the nation-state and its particular view of the rights and liberties of the citizen is a direct outgrowth of the peculiarly powerful formation of the medieval European state. Under the rubric of the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian monarchs it anointed to temporal power in the present world, the *saeculum*, the only definition of the good citizen was that of the orthodox believer; obligatory baptism at birth established a set of contractual obligations binding on the citizen until death. The permissible limits of orthodoxy and inquiry were actively policed, heresy being the technical definition of difference that could not be tolerated. It was St. Augustine in the fourth century of the Christian era who emphasised the dictum "Compel them to come in." which has been described as a doctrine of "constructive persecution", which was the underlying principle of how the nature of citizenship was conceived. It was the success of medieival Europe in establishing an interlocking social, political and economic system based on the premise of uniform orthodoxy that underpins all our notions of the contemporary nation-state.

The medieval social compact was ripped asunder by reforming dissent which created religious plurality. But the European nation-state had no intellectual resources to acknowledge a citizen who was not an

orthodox believer in conformity to the religious persuasion of the monarch and his government. To guarantee the conscientious liberty of the individual, and end the slaughter and persecution that affected every state in Europe, the concept of nation-state had to be secularised. At base, all civil and political liberties of Western man began as religious liberties. Dissent is viewed as the guarantor of liberty and civic freedom in the West because of a painful history of real struggle to wrest concessions from the centralising power and uniformatizing pressures of the nation-state. However, this historic perspective, the Whig vision of history, often neglects to notice that the development of the modern secular nation-state merely seeks to replicate the totalitarian, uniform notions of orthodoxy of its medieval precursor with an equally totalitarian, uniform notion of secularised orthodoxy. That is the very premise of the concept nation-state. It has no means of dealing with the kind of heterodoxy which has been the lived, historical experience of the peoples of Asia. The Western view of human rights is state-centred, predicated on the existence of the nation-state as historically conceived in Europe. It was this nation-state which determines who could be a citizen and what being a citizen should mean and entail. This has never been the predicament of non-Western traditional polities. To take the nation-state-centred view of human rights is to consign oneself to a dynamic of debate and activity that precludes genuine plurality and the ability to accommodate equality and respect for heterodox perspectives and mores.

So precious is the hard-won conscientious religious liberty of the individual in the West that its recipients are incapable of conceiving of religion as anything other than a source of the principles of intolerant compulsory denial of personal liberty. Secularism has so redefined the nature of what is tolerable as the practice of religion as to make religion a parody of what we in the non-West believe and how we understand it to shape our lives. The international order that guarantees the universal human right to the practice of religion of one's choice is itself a direct outgrowth of this secular imperium. And as we all know from recent experience, it is perceptibly unable to deal with the realities of a multireligious world, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is frequently asserted that an Asian perspective on human rights begins from a communal perspective while the dominant view of the

imperium reifies individualism to an absolute value. However, it is necessary to state clearly for the record that assertion of communal rights does not mean a license to persecute individuals. From an Islamic standpoint communal rights and individual rights are the same thing in that both the community and the individual are answerable to the selfsame ethical and moral values. Justice to the community or communal justice cannot be said to be achieved if justice is not available to the individual. You cannot promote a communal Asian view of human rights and then persecute the individual. There is a balance and equivalence between communal and individual inherent in Asian perspective—but this is a balance our societies have so far failed to actualise.

All the Islamic reform movements of the last hundred years have begun their concept of reform from the premise of the nation-state, a notion which in itself has no rootedness in Islamic philosophy or the history of Islamic civilization. Moreover, the notion of the nation-state is itself a dinosaur on the very brink of extinction through the even greater globalisation of Western civilization as the dominant world order. One cannot seek reform under the rubric of Islamic concepts unless we can question the nature of the system of governance that is possible, permissible or preferable. Too often Islamic reform movements violate such basic premises of the Islamic state as plurality by positing a uniform Muslim nation-state when the ideal we aspire to, the Medina state of the Beloved Prophet, was founded on the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah which made it the first multireligious state with a written constitutional basis guaranteeing the continuity of diverse identity to all the different communities who made up the state. I think it is appropriate to note that our meeting takes place in the singular example of a genuine multicultural, multireligious society that actually works. Malaysia, thanks to the determination of its majority community, and not without brickbats from the enlightened West where racism reigns unabashed, guarantees the rights of its various communities and is governed by a coalition representative of all communities. The Malaysia equation may not be the last word on how multiculturalism can work in the future but it is the most hopeful spot on the globe from which to demonstrate the standards all should strive to emulate. Malaysia is singular in another consideration: it has taken affirmative action to ensure the redistribution of real resources between its various communities, and has done so

with success and social and political stability. This it has achieved through economic growth and development which some participants seem to see as anathema. These are not easy points; any path in any direction carries its pitfalls. To suggest that communal or individual human dignity and rights can be upheld and poverty, the main stumbling block to their fulfilment, overcome without economic growth is to ask for a miracle. But what is economic growth if a blip on the globalised trading screen may close as many Asian avenues to indigenous sustainable development as it opens.

Confidence

We can only develop Asian alternatives if we have confidence in our traditions, confidence in our ability to think our way through to living traditions that we actively remake to remedy our current problems. It would be presumptuous for me to speak for others, but I must say that Muslims do not have confidence in their own traditions. We have got so used to defending the redoubt of minimal Islam that we have lost our sense of perspective and now see everything as a threat to our very existence. To survive one must resist, but that does not abrogate the need for common sense. What Muslims want to do, and what they have vociferously been doing in a number of notable recent cases, is to protect traditionalism as it has come down to us. As proof of allegiance to our alternative framework one finds oneself required to defend the completely indefensible, or to stand up for the avowedly unIslamic—a position which has no seeds of hope for the future. There is no hope in answering power and dominance with the *realpolitik* of power and dominance, it is not even a battle we can win for we begin with only the weapons of the powerless and do more violence to our own traditions than we can ever hope to inflict on the dominant order. Every resistance that is based on an unthinking reaction to every imagined threat and injury puts off the day when we will begin to wrestle with our need to recover and re-learn the living essence of our tradition so that we can become a community, an ummah, where the full gamut of rights and responsibilities, freedoms and obligations are realised in a sustainable and secure lifestyle that nurtures our communities and our individual citizens and the terrestrial home on which both depend.

Asian Spirituality and Human Rights

Mahmoud Ayoub

Method, scope and purpose

The present study will focus on the major religious traditions represented in Malaysia, namely Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. From each tradition, a few fundamental principles, doctrines or ideas will be used as the basis for the discussion of the underlying spiritual philosophy of that tradition.

The primary thesis of this essay is that Asian religious traditions and cultures have their own spiritual and moral philosophies which include primordial principles of human worth and dignity. These principles, therefore, can, and should, serve as the primary basis for human rights in Asian countries.[1]

It will be further argued that the very concept of human rights is a recent Western idea not based in the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic world-view, but in post-enlightenment secular culture. This concept, moreover, is based on an individualistic view of society, which is diametrically opposed to the Christian idea of the church as a "universal communion of saints" (*ecclesia*) as well as the Islamic concept of an *ummah* (community) enjoining the good, dissuading from evil and having true faith in God.[2] In contrast, the modern secular Western concept of human rights is a morally neutral concept based not on spiritual or religious principles, but on purely materialistic and social considerations.

Before turning to the subject of our discussion, it may be useful to explain the terms of reference of this essay and define its scope and purpose. "Asian spirituality" here refers not to the mystical heritage of Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, but to the fundamental principles and spiritual world-views of these traditions as they bear on the issue of human rights. It will not be possible within the limited scope of this study to take into account the philosophical, religious and legal developments in the three religious traditions under discussion. Hence, the

concepts chosen for examination are broad and generally accepted principles.

The aim of this modest endeavour is to stimulate dialogue among the participants in this most stimulating and timely conference. It is also to promote greater understanding between East and West, which I am sure, is the primary purpose of this learned colloquium.

Human rights: the Islamic perspective

The sacred law (*shariah*) of Islam makes a clear distinction between "the rights of God" (*huquq Allah*) and "the rights of the servants" (*huquq al-'ibad*). God's rights are the obligations (*fara'id*) which He made incumbent upon all human beings: to affirm His absolute oneness, sovereignty and transcendence, to worship Him alone, and to obey His sacred law. Human rights, in as much as they must fulfill the divine law (*shariah*), may also be considered as God's rights. A clear example of this is the *zakat* obligation which is one of the five pillars of Islam, and which the Quran always enjoins together with canonical worship *(salat)*.[3]

Human rights should, from the Islamic point of view, be regulated by the moral imperatives of the divine law. Ideally, they ought to be human emulations of God's moral characteristics. This ideal is expressed in the Prophetic *hadith*: "form your characters in accordance with God's moral characteristics."[4] Thus human rights according to the Quran and the faith it engenders, are theocentric in contrast to the Western view of human rights which is anthropocentric.[5] Not only human rights, but humankind's very being is a gift of God, and to Him shall all things return.

This essential difference in the perception of humankind and their rights and destiny is, I believe, one of the primary causes of conflict between the West and Islam. It may further be argued that according to the *shariah*, human rights are a necessary consequence of human duties towards God. They are not, as in the modern secular view, an expression of man's freedom independent of any divinely instituted religious, moral, or metaphysical principles or obligations. Rather, human beings have certain obligations towards God, the earth and its resources and the rest of the human family. As a consequence of fulfilling these obligations, human beings attain certain rights and liberties which are set forth in the divine law.[6]

The Quran regards man not as an inherently sinful creature, but as God's steward (*khalifah*) on earth,[7] possessing an innate disposition or capacity (*fitrah*) to know God and act righteously. In this lies humankind's freedom and responsibility. To have true faith is to know the truth or right, accept it and live by it. Conversely, to reject faith is to know the truth and wilfully deny it. This Quranic view contrasts sharply with the Christian doctrine of original sin, which was reformulated by medieval theologians, like St. Thomas Aquinas as well as post-Reformation American thinkers like Thomas Jefferson in the notion of "erroneous conscience".[8] From the Quranic perspective, human rights may be generally seen as expressions of social, personal and religious liberties within the framework of justice, mercy, equality before God and obedience to His law. The Quran uses two terms for justice, *'adl'* which means a just balance in human conduct between the two extremes of immoderate indulgence and callous neglect—and *gist* which means the just exercise of power. In the absolute sense, justice belongs to God alone; it is an aspect of His absolute oneness and sovereignty. Rational creatures, and especially human beings, share in Divine Justice through their knowledge and affirmation of God's oneness and sovereignty.[9]

Mercy or compassion (*rahmah*) is likewise a divine attribute which human beings also share. Etymologically, the Arabic word *rahmah* is derived from the same root of the word *rahim*, meaning womb. It thus signifies the closest and most intimate relationship between two rational beings. God's mercy towards His human creation is His forgiveness, love and the gift of life itself. Among human beings, mercy is shown in mutual tolerance and respect, forgiveness as well as moral and material care in the face of adversity and misfortune. Mercy is a right which God prescribed for Himself.[10] It is also the right of human beings towards one another which they must show in recognition of God's mercy towards them.

Equality before God means that no human being has any priority over another human being on account of his wealth, ethnic identity, lineage or social status. People may strive to excel one another only in righteous works. The Quranic principle is that humankind is created of one male and one female, Adam and Eve. God says:

> Humankind, We created you all from one male and one female and made you nations and tribes in order that you may know one another. Surely, the noblest of you in God's sight is the most righteous of you.[11]

Equality before God also implies equal human worth and dignity. According to the Quran, the life of one individual is no more expendable than the life of all of humanity. This is because the value of human life cannot be measured numerically, ideologically or socially. Rather, the life of every human individual has its own inherent and sacrosanct worth. The Quran asserts:

> . . . he who kills a soul, unless for murder or spreading corruption in the earth, it is as though he had killed all of humanity, and he who saves [lit. revives] it, it is as though he had saved the life of all of humanity.[12]

Although the modern secular concept of human rights is foreign to the Islamic religious tradition and moral ideology, the rights themselves are not. Rights to freedom of faith and conscience, to just and compassionate treatment, to freedom of movement and self-determination are strictly mandated by the Quran. They are further elaborated, restricted and codified as law by the Islamic tradition of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). The point at issue among Muslim activists and intellectuals has been the extent to which the formulations of classical Islamic jurisprudence as well as those of modern positive law reflect the spirit of the Quran and its purpose. This is because the Quran is not a legal document but a book of moral and spiritual guidance to God and the good.

Since the United Nations Human Rights Declaration in 1948, the philosophy and implementation of human rights have been hotly debated by Muslim intellectuals, religious leaders and politicians. From the start, this debate has clearly evinced a great diversity of Muslim views and approaches to this issue.

For example, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan took diametrically opposed positions on the Declaration. The former objected to some of its provisions and the latter unconditionally supported it. The two positions were based not so much on the Quran and *sunnah* of the Prophet, but on the historical understanding of Arab and Indian Muslims of what Islam is all about.[13]

Since the beginning of this century, the break-up of large Muslim domains into many nation-states was accelerated. The overwhelming majority of these states adopted Western nationalistic ideologies, laws and economic and political systems. Particularly after World War II when most Muslim nations gained their independence from colonial domination, the issues of human rights and democracy became as much Islamic as Western concerns. In fact, most Muslim countries have, in varying degrees, adopted secular systems of government. Furthermore, some tacitly, and most officially, committed themselves to the United Nations Human Rights Charter.

The 1972 Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in which all Muslim states are active members, endorsed international law and fundamental human rights. The preamble of the charter commits its members to preserving Islamic spiritual, ethical, social and economic values as an important factor in achieving human progress. The members also reaffirmed their commitment to the United Nations Charter, including its provisions for fundamental human rights. The principles and purposes of the U.N. Charter were accepted as a sound basis for "co-operation amongst all peoples."[14]

Less than a decade later, in 1980, a seminar on human rights in Islam was organized by the International Commission of Jurists, the University of Kuwait and the Union of Arab Lawyers. The seminar concluded: "The time has come to refute the idea that initiation and continued development on the concept of human rights must be exclusively attributed to Western cultures."[15] The seminar admitted that while Islam guarantees fundamental human rights, Muslim states have often deviated from Islamic principles. A call was therefore issued to all Muslims to return to the fundamentals of Islam, and not be swayed to the right and left by the West.[16]

One of the thorny issues in the human rights debate concerns the rights of non-Muslims in Muslim lands. Muslim apologists have always referred to the Quran and Prophetic tradition to argue for the tolerance of Islam and the Quran's insistence on religious freedom in the categorical statements:

> Let there be no coercion in religion. [and] Had your Lord so willed, all those on earth would have accepted faith, all of them. Would you then [Muhammad] coerce people until they become people of faith?[17]

In accordance with these and other Quranic verses asserting God's sole authority to judge in matters of faith, the seminar called on Muslim states to guarantee the rights of their non-Muslim citizens. Some of the rights specified were: freedom to practice their religion and conduct their ceremonies, pursue their professions, and like everyone else, benefit from state aid programmes. These rights, it was argued, are supported by the Quranic injunction: "Let there be no coercion in religion."

In the same year (1980), and on the occasion of the beginning of the 15th century of the Hijrah, the Islamic Council of Europe sponsored a gathering of leading Muslim scholars to draft an Islamic declaration of human rights. The Declaration was presented to UNESCO in September of the following year. In the preamble to this important human rights document, it is stated that the Declaration is based on the Quran and *sunnah*, the two primary sources of Islamic law and morality. It was, moreover addressed to all Muslims as well as non-Muslim believers.

The mission of humankind, as conceived by the Islamic Declaration is to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and co-operation among all the peoples of the earth, and to strive for a world free from oppression and conflict.

The rights it proclaims are eternal, not capable of being altered, abrogated or suspended, because they are established by God. They are, moreover, based on the principle of equality among all human beings, regardless of descent, race, religion and social status.

The rights advocated by this Declaration are essentially the same as those included in the U.N. Declaration of 1948. The main difference is that they are supported by the Quran and Prophetic tradition. They include the following:

1. The right to life: This includes the right to a dignified burial after death.

2. The right to freedom: It includes both individual and personal freedom. Here is meant freedom from coercion and enslavement. The freedom of both the individual and society can be limited only by the authority of the sacred law (*shariah*).

3. Right of equality: This includes equal wages and equal share of natural resources. It strictly forbids discrimination on the basis of sex, race, colour, language or religion.

4. Right to justice under the sacred law.

5. Right of the accused to due legal process. This means that innocence must be presumed until guilt is proven.

The Declaration also upholds that right to freedom of religion as well as protection of the religious rights of minorities.[18] No doubt, this is the most serious Muslim attempt to deal with the issue of human rights so far. That the conference which produced it met not in any Muslim country but in the West is especially significant. Noteworthy is the Declaration's unequivocal support for religious freedom and the freedom of expression.

It may be argued that Islam allows freedom of faith and conscience but not the freedom to change one's religion. This is because religion in all the traditional societies of the Middle East, and until recently of the West as well, denoted a person's religious, political and social identity. The idea that a person had no religion is foreign to the three monotheistic traditions of the Middle East and the traditional cultures they engendered. Therefore, normally a person did not leave his/her religion for no religion at all, but rather he/she would leave the community of one religion for another. This often meant that a person changed his political and military loyalties and joined the camp of the enemy army.

Since, however, citizenship today does not necessarily denote religious loyalty, the laws forbidding or restricting religious freedom should be suspended. Because, moreover, these laws are not strictly speaking based on the Quran or sound Prophetic *sunnah*, suspending them should not present insurmountable obstacles. They should not be abrogated, as they form part of the Islamic legal tradition, but for Islam to continue to speak to the situation of humankind today, past tradition must be interpreted in the light of present realities. This difficult task requires patience, sensitivity, and above all, sincerity of faith. The Islamic Declaration of Human Rights and the present conference provide good demonstrations of these admirable qualities.

The eternal Dharma and human rights: the Hindu perspective

The world-view of the Hindu faith as presented in the Upanishads and other sacred writings is based on the unity of all things. This means that, while there is the law of *karma* which in the end determines human inequality, entrenched in the caste system of Hindu society, on the level

of devotion to God (*bhakti*) and the Vedantic monistic philosophy, all creations—human and animal—have equal worth and meaning as manifestations of the divine. Although this philosophy was not always invoked to support fundamental human rights, there have been loud and eloquent voices calling for the recognition of the divine in every human being. Mystics like Ramanuja and activists like Mahatma Gandhi called for the support of human rights from within their rich spiritual heritage.

Furthermore, the principle of *ahimsa*, or non-injury to living things, has frequently been invoked to defend the rights of the untouchables whom Gandhi called *harijans* (God's children). Yet, in spite of Gandhi's persistent efforts which culminated in the Indian constitution which guarantees equal rights for all, untouchability remains the biggest problem for human rights.

Even though untouchability was outlawed, it is still widely practised. It is a morally and socially reprehensible practice because it relegates a large section of society to an unclean status.[19]

Hinduism, it may be argued, has no concept of human rights. This, in part, is due to the fact that Manu's ancient legal and ethical code, contained in the Dharmashastra remains influential in Hindu society till the present. The ancient sage envisaged a tightly regulated social order of a traditional and highly stratified hierarchical society. Manu's ethical norms of justice and proper vocation may be helpful in creating a religiously oriented social order, but they cannot be used to support a secularly based Human Rights Declaration.

Human rights can be discussed within a traditional Hindu religious and ethical context under the rubric of justice and propriety. But even these two terms are open to endless interpretation. In the context of a secular, individualistic and democratic frame of reference, these two terms imply egalitarianism which runs counter to the Hindu caste system.[20]

Like other world religions, Hinduism is not a monolithic tradition. Hindu thinkers present a wide diversity of opinion with regard to the UN Human Rights Declaration. Some have accepted it as a universally valid document. Others have rejected it on the grounds that it reflects an alien Western culture, and still others have accepted it with reservations. Such thinkers rely not on Manu's Dharmashastra, but on the concept of *svadharma* of the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita sees the *svadharma*

of every individual as his proper nature, vocation, or ultimate goal in life. One should therefore fulfill his *dharma* or duty in life with resigned dignity and satisfaction.

It was on the basis of *svadharma*, which Gandhi interpreted to refer to human nature and worth, that he admitted untouchables to his ashrams as equal members with the people of the higher or twice-born castes. Nevertheless, Gandhi did not advocate individual rights in the Western sense but "*dharma*, an ethic of community, responsibility and loyalty." He said:

> All rights to be deserved and preserved come from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world.[21]

The Four Noble Truths and human rights: the Buddhist perspective

In contrast with Hinduism, Buddhism is based on a truly egalitarian philosophy. In fact, Buddhism began as a revolt against Brahminical power and its religious system. The Buddha rejected the gods and hence the power which the Brahmin priesthood wielded on their behalf. He rejected the concept of the soul (*atman*) which lies at the roots of Hindu social stratification. He thus rejected the caste system and admitted to his order (the Sangha) men and women of all walks of life. Instead, he taught the Four Noble Truths of suffering (*dukkha*) and the means for its cessation.

The key ideas of the Buddha's teaching are: ignorance which leads to desire, desire which leads to rebirth, and rebirth which leads to suffering. Desire means "the insatiable and overwhelmingly unchecked force of craving in one's own being."[22] The Buddha called it *tanha*, clinging to things, so that suffering must follow. Rebirth denotes the impermanence of all things, hence the dizzying round of becoming (*samsara*).

Salvation is not achieved through rituals or prayers, but through an actual living by the noble eightfold path which includes right resolve, right effort, right speech, right mindfulness and right concentration. Salvation is essentially being free from ignorance and desire. An enlightened person should instead be filled with wisdom and compassion for all living things.

In the framework of the Buddhist moral philosophy, human rights cannot be considered in themselves but rather they should be viewed as an extension of human nature. Human rights are in the end subject to the refinements of the spiritual awareness and moral character of each individual in the larger society. More important than the rights of the individual to do what she/he will is the quest for liberation from the eternal round of birth and rebirth. This liberation, however, requires total selflessness, which in turn evinces moral compassion towards all things.

Human rights, then, are not an end in themselves but part of the realization of the human individual into the wise and compassionate human being, who is concerned for the good of all sentient beings. This noble ideal is powerfully expressed in the Buddhist concept of the Boddhisatva who refuses to enter into Nirvana until he leads all sentient beings into this state of unspeakable bliss.

The Buddhist philosophy attracted many in the East and West. In this great vehicle of salvation many low-caste and untouchable Hindus found solace and meaning for their life and ultimate destiny. A well-known Hindu convert to Buddhism, Ambedkar, describes the Buddhist moral law (*dharma*) thus:

> [Dharma is that] universal morality which protects the weak from the strong, which provides common models, standards, and rules, and which safeguards the growth of the individual. It is what makes liberty and equality effective.[23]

To the internationally known Thai activist and Buddhist scholar Sulak Sivaraksa, *dharma* means that "The defence of human rights takes ethical precedence over national sovereignty."[24]

Sulak Sivaraksa, who has gone through personal difficulties in taking up this challenge against human rights violations presents in these few words a challenge to political opportunists, ideologues and intellectuals everywhere.

Concluding remarks

It must be concluded from all this that Asian religious traditions—not only the ones discussed here but those of the rest of Asia as well—have

their own profound moral principles that could serve as a framework for the realization of human rights in their own societies. It is high time that the West learn from the East the meaning of moral freedom and the true significance of non-material values rather than dictate to the peoples of Asia its own confused and highly selective principles of human rights.

It must also be argued that no traditional society would define human rights to mean licentiousness, promiscuity and deviation from the eternal norms that have guided humanity for thousands of years in its quest for ultimate fulfilment. It is arrogant and hypocritical of any country, on the basis of its material wealth and military might, to dictate to other countries how to live and how to develop and preserve their values and fundamental rights.

On the other hand, it is opportunistic cynicism of Asian and African dictators to ignore pleas to show greater respect for the most fundamental rights of their citizens on the grounds of Western cultural neo-colonialism. Oppression, torture, extortion and flagrant disrespect for human life and dignity are moral and social evils which no culture or religious tradition condones. In today's religiously and culturally pluralistic world, nations must work together for the preservation of moral and spiritual values and the safeguarding of the fundamental rights of liberty, equality before God and international law and human dignity. Malaysia, as an economically prosperous, socially progressive and religiously and culturally pluralistic country provides a living model for a just world in the coming century.

Endnotes

1. For a good survey of representative views of human rights in the countries of East and Southeast Asia, see Robert Traer, *Faith and Human Rights Support in Religious Traditions for a Global Struggle* Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1991, Chapter 10, pp. 157 ff.

2. This divine challenge is frequently repeated in the noble Quran. See for example: 3:104, 110.

3. This Divine obligation is unequivocally expressed in the oft-repeated injunction: "establish regular worship and remit the *zakat* alms: see for example, 2:43, 83, 110 and 4:162.

4. This popular mystical saying reads, "*takhallaqu bi-akhlag* Allah."

5. See Riffat Hassan, "On Human Rights and the Quranic Perspective," in *Human Rights in the Religious Traditions*, ed. Arlene Swidler, New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982, p. 52.

6. See Traer, *Faith in Human Rights*, p. 115.

7. The Quran states (2:30) that when God wished to create Adam, He announced to the angels: "I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth." The Quran extends this privilege to all of humankind, particularly those exercising authority over others. Thus God addresses King David, "O David, we have made you a vicegerent (*khalifah*) in the earth, therefore judge among people in truth, 38:26.".

8. David Little, John Kelsay, and Abdulaziz A. Sachedina, *Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures: Western and Islamic Perspectives on Religious Liberty*, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988, p. 15ff.

9. The relationship of knowledge to faith and justice is depicted in a good number of Quranic verses. See specially 3:18, 55:8-9 and 35:28.

10 The Quran states, "*kataba 'ala nafsihi* al-*rahmah*" (6:12), meaning that God made mercy an obligation for Himself. It is the only Divine self-imposed prescription mentioned in the Quran.

11. Q. 49:13, see also 4:1.

12. Q. 5:32), for a discussion of this Quranic principle in the context of human rights, see Traer, *Faith in Human Rights*, p. 114.

13. David Little *et al*,*Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures*, p. 31ff.

14. Ann E. Mayer,*Islam and Human Rights*, p. 14.

15. Robert Traer, *Faith in Human Rights*, pp. 111-12.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

17. Q. 2:256 and 10:99; see also 6:107.

18. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Islam," *Encounter:Documents for Muslim-Christian Understanding*, No. 116, June 1985.

19. Robert Traer, *Faith in Human Rights*, p. 129

20. See the frank and useful discussion of these cross-cultural problems by K. Mitra, "Human Rights in Hinduism," in Arlene Swidler ed., *Human Rights*, pp. 78 ff.

21. Robert Traer, *Faith in Human Rights*, p. 131.

22. Kenneth K. Inada, "The Buddhist Perspective on Human Rights," in Arlene Swidler, ed., *Human Rights* p. 69.

23. Quoted in Robert Traer, *Faith in Human Rights; Support in Religious Traditions for a Global Struggle*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1991, p. 134.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

Towards Human Dignity

Chandra Muzaffar

It is important at the very outset to explain what has come to be accepted as the conventional meaning of human rights. Though the human rights contained in the multitude of UN human rights Declarations, Covenants and Conventions cover a whole range of rights, including an economic right such as the right to food, and a collective of rights such as the people's right to self-determination, the term 'human rights' as used by most human rights activists today carries a more restricted meaning. Human rights are often equated with individual rights—specifically individual civil and political rights. This equation has a genealogy, a history behind it.

The equation of human rights with individual civil and political rights is a product of the European Enlightenment and the secularisation of thought and society of the last 150 years. Whatever the weaknesses of this conception of human rights, there is no doubt at all that it has contributed significantly to human civilisation.

One, it has helped to empower the individual. By endowing the individual with rights, such as the right of expression, the right of association, the right of assembly, the right to vote, the right to a fair trial and so on, it has strengthened the position of the individual as never before in history. These are rights that inhere in the individual as a human being. They are his/her rights; he/she does not owe these rights to a benevolent government or a magnanimous monarch.

Two, by empowering the individual, this particular human rights tradition has contributed towards the transformation of what were once authoritarian political systems into democratic political structures. For the empowerment of the individual—as demonstrated by the history of European democracies—helped to create the political space which resulted in the entrenchment of civil society. It was the growth of civil society in the West which strengthened the sinews of democratic political culture.

Three, the empowerment of the individual and the evolution of civil society played a big part in checking the arbitrary exercise of power of those in authority. In Europe, as in other parts of the world, right through human history, the arbitrariness of the wielders of power and authority has been one of the greatest banes upon the well-being of both individual and community. Human rights ideas born out of the Enlightenment and the secularisation of society—more than perhaps any other set of ideas from any other epoch—challenged this blight upon humanity.

Four, by curbing their arbitrariness, by regulating their activities, the wielders of power in Europe were compelled to become more accountable to the people. Public accountability developed into a norm of democratic governance. The empowerment and the enhancement of the individual have, in other words, brought governments within the control of the governed through institutions established to ensure public accountability.

But what is sad is that while Europe built the edifice of the individual within its own borders, it destroyed the human person on other shores. As human rights expanded among white people, European Empires inflicted horrendous human wrongs upon the coloured inhabitants of the planet. The elimination of the native populations of the Americas and Australasia and the enslavement of millions of Africans during the European slave trade were two of the greatest human rights tragedies of the colonial epoch. Of course, the suppression of millions of Asians in almost every part of the continent during the long centuries of colonial domination was also another colossal human rights calamity. Western colonialism in Asia, Australasia, Africa and Latin America represents the most massive, systematic violation of human rights ever known in history.

Though formal colonial rule has ended, Western domination and control continues to impact upon the human rights of the vast majority of the people of the non-Western world in ways which are more subtle and sophisticated but no less destructive and devastating. The dominant West, for instance, controls global politics through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). If certain Western powers so desire, they can get the UNSC to impose sanctions, however unjust they may be, upon any state which, in their view, needs to be coerced to submit to their will . This ability to force others to submit to their will is backed by the West's —particularly the United States—global military dominance.

It is a dominance which bestows upon the West effective control over high grade weapons technology and most weapons of mass destruction. The dominant West also controls global economics through the IMF, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation(WTO) and the G7. The self-serving economic policies of powerful states have cost the poor in the non-Western world billions of dollars in terms of revenue—money which translated into basic needs could have saved some 15 million lives in the non-Western world every year. The dominant West controls global news and information through Reuters, AP, UPI, AFP and most of all CNN. Likewise, Western music, Western films, Western fashions and Western foods are creating a global culture which is not only Western in character and content but also incapable of accommodating non-Western cultures on a just and equitable basis. Underlying this Western dominated global culture and information system is an array of ideas, values and even worldviews pertaining to the position of the individual, inter-gender relations, inter-generational ties, the family, the community, the environment and the cosmos which have evolved from a particular tradition—namely the Western secular tradition. These ideas, values and worldviews are marginalising other ideas about the human being, about human relations and about societal ties embodied in older and richer civilisations. It is a process of marginalisation which could, in the long run, result in the moral degradation and spiritual impoverishment of the human being.

Though the consequences of domination are enormous for the dominated, the major centres of power in the West—the US, Britain and France, the Western military establishment, Western multinational corporations (MNCs), the mainstream Western media, a segment of Western academia, some Western NGOs—are determined to perpetuate their global power. They are determined to do this even if it leads to the violation of the very principles of democracy and human rights which they espouse. That is why a superpower like the US has, since 1945, in spite of its professed commitment to human rights and democracy, aided and abetted many more dictatorships than democracies in the non-western world.

Even today, after the end of the Cold War, the US and its allies continue to suppress genuine human rights and pro-democracy movements in various parts of the world. The US's continued support for

Israel against the Palestinian struggle for nationhood is one such example. The US and its Western allies, notably France, have also failed to support the Algerian movement for human rights and social justice expressed through Islam. There are similar movements for freedom and justice in Egypt and Saudi Arabia which Western governments see as a threat to their interests in the region. Long standing movements for self-determination in East Timor, Tibet and Kashmir also have little support from major Western governments. Perhaps, more than anything else, it is the West's total lack of commitment to the human rights of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina which reveals that in the ultimate analysis it is not human rights which count but the preservation of self-interest and the perpetuation of dominant power.

It is because many people in the non-Western world now know that dominance and control is the real motive and goal of the West that they have become skeptical and critical of the West's posturing on human rights. What has increased their skepticism of the West is the deterioration and degeneration in human rights standards within Western society itself.

Degeneration of human rights standards is occurring in at least five areas.

One, White racism in Europe and North America is making a mockery of the Western claim that it is a champion of human rights. The rights and dignity of non-White minorities are challenged almost every day in the West by the arrogance of racist sentiments among segments of the White population.

Two, the economic malaise in the West is eroding fundamental economic rights such as the right to work. Can the West protect the economic rights of its people in the midst of rising unemployment and continuing economic stagnation?

Three, as violence, and the fear it generates, increases in Western societies one wonders whether Western societies are capable anymore of protecting the basic right of the people to live without fear. After all, isn't freedom from fear a fundamental human right?

Four, since the right to found a family is a fundamental human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, isn't the disintegration of the family as the basic unit of society in many Western countries today a negation of a fundamental human right?

Five, confronted by the reality of family disintegration, violence, economic stagnation and racism one senses that the Western political system—emphasis upon human rights and democracy notwithstanding—no longer possesses the will and the wherewithal to bring about fundamental changes to society. What is the meaning of individual rights and liberties if they are utterly incapable of affecting meaningful transformations in values, attitudes and structures which are imperative if the West is to lift itself out of its spiritual and psychological morass?

The dominant West's violations of human rights in the non-Western world, coupled with its inability to uphold some of the fundamental rights of its own citizens, has raised some important questions about the very nature and character of Western human rights.

One, has the creative individuality of an earlier phase in Western history given way to gross, vulgar individualism which today threatens the very fabric of Western society? Isn't individualism of this sort a negation of the community?

Two, has the glorification and adulation of individual freedom as an end in itself reached a point where individual freedom has become the be-all and end-all of human existence? Isn't freedom in the ultimate analysis a means towards a greater good rather than an end in itself?

Three,isn't this notion of freedom in the West linked to an idea of rights which is often divorced from responsibilities? Can rights be separated from responsibilities in real life?

Four, isn't the dominant Western concept of rights itself particularistic and sectional since it emphasises only civil and political rights and downplays economic, social and cultural rights?

Five, how can a concept of rights confined to the nation-state respond to the challenges posed by an increasingly global economic, political and cultural system? Isn't it true that the dominant Western approach to human rights fails to recognise the role of global actors—like the UNSC, IMF and MNCs—in the violation of human rights?

Six, whether one articulates rights or upholds responsibilities, shouldn't they be guided by universal moral and spiritual values which would determine the sort of rights we pursue and the type of responsibilities we fulfil? Without a larger spiritual and moral framework, which endows human endeavour with meaning and purpose, with coherence

and unity, wouldn't the emphasis on rights *per se* lead to moral chaos and confusion?

Seven, what are human rights if they are not related to more fundamental questions about the human being—Who is the human being? Why is the human being here? Where does the human being go from here? How can one talk of the rights of the human being without a more profound understanding of the human being himself?

It is because of these and other flaws in the very character of the Western approach to human rights that there is an urgent need to try to evolve a vision of human dignity which is more just, more holistic and more universal. In Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Taoism, Christianity, Judaism and even in the theistic strains within Confucianism and Buddhism there are elements of such a vision of the human being, of human rights and of human dignity. The idea that the human being is vicegerent or trustee of God whose primary role is to fulfil God's trust is lucidly articulated in various religions. As God's trustee the human being lives his life according to clearly established spiritual and moral values and principles. The rights he possesses, like the responsibilities he undertakes, must be guided by these values and principles. What this means is that human rights and human freedoms are part of a larger spiritual and moral worldview. This also means that individual freedom is not the be-all and end-all of human existence. Neither is the individual the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong, of good and evil. The individual and community must both submit to spiritual and moral values which transcend both individual and community. It is the supremacy of these values and, in the end, of the Divine which distinguishes our God-guided concept of human dignity from the present individual-centred notion of human rights.

The great challenge before us is to develop this vision of human dignity culled from our religious and spiritual philosophies into a comprehensive charter of values and principles, responsibilities and rights, roles and relationships acceptable to human beings everywhere. To do this we should first distinguish what is universal and eternal within our respective traditions from what is particularistic and contextual. On that basis we should dialogue with people of all religions on the question of human dignity. Even those of secular persuasion should be invited to dialogue with people of faith. Indeed, as we have indicated, there is a

great deal in the secular human rights tradition that we should absorb and imbibe in the process of developing our vision of human dignity.

To develop our vision into a vision which has relevance to the realities which human beings have to grapple with, our dialogue should focus upon concrete contemporary issues that challenge human dignity everywhere—issues of global domination and global control of poverty and disease, of political oppression and cultural chauvinism, of moneyism and materialism, of corruption and greed, of the disintegration of the community and the alienation of the individual. It would, in other words, be a dialogue on life and living. This is perhaps the best time to initiate such a dialogue since Asian societies buoyed by their economic dynamism are now beginning to ask some searching questions about the nexus between moral values and human rights.

Of course, not all sections of Asian societies are asking the same questions about the link between morality and rights. Some Asian governments, for instance, have chosen to focus solely upon the adverse consequences of crass individualism upon the moral fabric of Western societies. As an antidote, they emphasize the importance of strengthening existing family and community ties in Asian cultures. For us who seek inspiration and guidance from our spiritual and moral philosophies in a non-selective manner, it is not just family and community that are important. We know that the individual expressing himself or herself through the community also has a crucial place in most of our philosophies. After all, in all religions, the Divine message is, in the ultimate analysis, addressed to the individual. For it is the individual, and the individual alone, who is capable of moral and spiritual transformation. Similarly, it is not just the moral crisis of Western society that we lament; we are no less sensitive to the moral decadence within our own societies—especially within our elite strata. If we are adherents to a universal spiritual and moral ethic that applies to all human beings, we should not hesitate to condemn the suppression of human rights and the oppression of dissident groups that occur from time to time in a number of our countries. Our commitment to spiritual and moral values, drawn from our religions, should never serve as a camouflage for authoritarian elites who seek to shield their sins from scrutiny. Indeed,

any attempt to do so would tantamount to a travesty of the eternal truth embodied in all our religions. And what is that truth? That religion's primary concern is the dignity of all human beings.

This then is the road that we must travel; the journey we must undertake. From Western human rights which, as this conference has shown, has been so selective and sectarian to a genuinely universal human dignity—which remains the human being's yet unfulfilled promise to God.

Special Address

Anwar Ibrahim

We commend the Just World Trust (JUST) for its boldness in choosing the theme of this conference. The organisers certainly run the risk of being reproached as "reactionaries" by certain quarters of the human rights lobby for the audacity to question some of their cherished assumptions. Nonetheless, a critical rethinking of the notion of human rights has become necessary on account of the growing number of advocates who propagate it with such single-mindedness and fanaticism that they overlook other no less crucial societal issues. These issues may differ from country to country. In Malaysia, for example, such an issue may be the preservation of public order and harmony. In another country, it may be the eradication of hardcore poverty or the reduction of iniquities between social groups. In all cases, if those issues are not addressed as part of the human rights movement, then the desired impact on the people will not be gained.

We share the reservations expressed throughout this conference about some aspects of the human rights movement. This, however, is in no way spawned by the East-West cultural confrontation as was made clear yesterday by Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. We are certainly not oblivious to the crimes against humanity perpetrated by non-Western people. Tyranny and injustice are repugnant to civil society wherever they may occur, and to cite cultural differences or Asian values in order to deflect from ourselves criticism against human rights violations is an affront to our moral sense.

The present contest in interpretations and conceptions of human rights is indeed deplorable. Many Asians often reject the very idea of human rights because it is regarded as Western, thus alien to their cultures. The West, on the other hand, sees it as part of its civilising mission to impose on the rest of the world their brand of human rights. We should neither accept a total denial of the concept of human rights, nor a patronising attitude towards non-Western societies on this issue. It is for this reason that dialogue must be pursued more vigorously to

bridge the differences, real or perceived. As far as Asian societies are concerned, the protection of human rights is an integral part of their traditions. In Islam, for one, human rights is enshrined in the Quran and the Traditions. The Prophet said: 'Your lives, your possessions and your dignity are as sacred as this day (of the Great Pilgrimage).'

The central issue in the contemporary discourse on human rights is not so much whether it is Western or Eastern in origin but rather the balance between civil and political rights on the one hand, and societal and economic rights on the other. The advocacy of human rights cannot be reduced to a mere slogan such as "Give me liberty or give me death." Human rights concerns will be rendered meaningless if only pursued by the elite and the affluent who at the same time relegate the more pressing issues such as social injustice and poverty to the sidelines. While we agree that developing countries must not compromise political and other liberties related to the growth of civil society, we nonetheless regard as paramount the safeguarding of economic and social rights—rights that ensure decent and humane living conditions for the people.

Beyond this basic level of rights is the equally compelling right of the marginalized, socially disadvantaged or economically weak to participate in mainstream societal processes and economic activities and to benefit from the principle of equal opportunity. In most cases, affirmative action programmes are regarded as necessary to realise the ideals of human dignity and social equality. In such circumstances, the performance of developing countries, often subjected to trenchant criticism from human rights groups, has sometimes been better than the industrialised countries. In some developing countries, progress in improving the quality of life—better housing, access to health and quality education—has been remarkable. There are more productive and mutually enriching interactions among ethnic groups and social classes. .On the other hand, in some industrial societies racism has become cancerous and anti-foreigner agitation is on the rise. Growing poverty and homelessness in their cities not only testify to the deteriorating social conditions of their marginalized communities but also the erosion of civic ideals of the society at large. The disenchantment towards the dream of equality has become more pervasive as the gap between the professed ideals of the society and social and economic realities widens. Thus, the urgency to entrench these rights, to promote equality and to realise

social justice is no more paramount in developing states than in the West. We believe that the cause of human rights can be made more credible if Western societies attempt to practise more of the ideals that they preach to the rest of the world.

While we accord high priority to social and economic rights, we must at the same time guard ourselves from stretching the argument too far. Development cannot be used as an apology for authoritarianism. Indeed, it is often argued that civil and political liberties are incompatible with the pressing needs of backward or emerging economies. Democracy, it is claimed, follows economic advancement and not vice-versa. Democratic countries with poor economic performances juxtaposed with not-so-democratic countries with a markedly authoritarian bent have been cited to support that proposition. The fact of the matter is that more nations have been impoverished by authoritarianism than enriched by it. Authoritarian rule more often than not has been used as a masquerade for kleptocracies, bureaucratic incompetence, and worst of all, for unbridled nepotism and corruption. By not giving a vent to the voices of dissent, wrongs cannot be made right and remedies for failures cannot be made available. Thus the notion that freedom must be sacrificed on the altar of development must be rejected. Indeed, it is our conviction that only through the ability of every individual, however weak or disadvantaged, to freely articulate fears and grievances, can we hope to bring about a just and caring society. Only by guaranteeing the individual's right to participate fully in the society's decision-making processes can we confer legitimacy to political leadership and governance, for governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Yet order and freedom are not necessarily incompatible. It is the concern of a responsible government to ensure peace, order and stability of the society. As Rousseau said: 'The social order is a sacred right which serves as a basis for all other rights.' With anarchy and disorder, the fundamental rights will be largely illusory. Hence freedom of speech entails a corresponding duty not to disseminate lies, not to incite communal and religious hatred, and generally not to undermine the moral fabric of society. The right to property may have to be balanced against the State's right to acquire private property for societal development.

And similarly, freedom of religion does not confer a license to promote fanaticism or to spread deviationist teachings which could threaten social stability and lead to discord and even violence.

In the final analysis, the protection of human rights is a fundamental moral issue that demands commitment, and should not be used as an instrument of foreign policy or as a Trojan horse to hide commercial interests. The ultimate object of governance is the establishment and preservation of a civil society, wherein all its members are not only accorded the right to enjoy life, liberty and to pursue happiness, but also provided the means of realising those rights. However, the application of these ideals in the global community has been rendered hollow as the result of their total abandonment by Western powers in Bosnia and their moral abdication in Rwanda. Any talk or pronouncements of human rights would be deemed hypocritical posturing unless its advocates match exhortation with action where it is most needed. There must also be equal resolve to address social issues such as poverty, hunger and disease often glossed over by human rights activists.

For Asian countries the credibility of our criticism against Western powers hinges upon our commitment to our own values on the sanctity of the human person, justice, virtue and compassion. Our conception of the protection of human rights must necessarily issue from these ideals which in themselves are universal. Thus, we must strive to inculcate ideals and values which enhance the quality of life, strengthen solidarity and promote cultural and moral upliftment. Liberty must not lead to licentiousness, freedom must not lead to anarchy.

Concluding Remarks

S.M. Mohamed Idris

On behalf of the Just World Trust (JUST), I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you—paperwriters, moderators, rapporteurs, compere, special session officers, participants and all those who have helped us in organising and running this conference, not forgetting our excellent volunteer workforce - for your valuable contributions towards making this important conference on "Rethinking Human Rights" a great success. I am sure all of us have benefited immensely from the papers presented at the conference and the ensuing discussions.

The discussions during the conference clearly revealed that the violation and denial of human rights to the majority of the population on this planet is rooted in the Western domination of the countries of the South. The conquest and subjugation of our societies 500 years ago still continues but in different forms.

Noam Chomsky, the renowned American scholar, writes in his book, *Year 501: The Conquest Continues,* "The conquest of the New World set off two vast demographic catastrophes, unparalleled in history: the virtual destruction of the indigenous population of the Western hemisphere and the devastation of Africa as the slave trade rapidly expanded to serve the needs of the conquerors, and the continent itself was subjugated. Much of Asia too suffered 'dreadful misfortunes'. While modalities have changed, the fundamental themes of the conquest retain their vitality and resilience, and will continue to do so until the reality and causes of the 'savage injustice' are honestly addressed."

The decolonisation of Asia, Africa and Latin America did not lead to the liberation of their peoples from poverty, hunger and backwardness and the enjoyment of the basic freedoms because the relationship between the countries of the Tricontinent and the West was still based on exploitation and domination by the latter.

The colonial ruling elite has been replaced, in many cases, by Westernised local elites, very often authoritarian and corrupt, who serve their Western masters and help to perpetuate this unequal and unjust

relationship. Consequently, the South continues its role assigned by the Western colonialists of providing cheap labour, raw materials and investment opportunities. Any attempt at changing this unjust relationship so that the South nations can take control of their resources and decision-making functions and stop the siphoning away of their wealth, which could be used for building a strong and independent economic base, has been, and will be strongly opposed by the Western Powers.

Opposition to such attempts, very often, takes the form of economic measures, including economic warfare. International organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have become the instruments for chastening recalcitrant nations who dare to challenge Western power and domination. When economic measures fail, the use of force, including cruise missiles, laser guided bombs and other weapons of mass destruction are resorted to in order to defend Western domination. The Western nations have no commitment to human rights. The rhetoric of human rights, democracy and free trade have become instruments for perpetuating Western domination of the South. Human rights is good so long as it serves Western interests.

The Serb aggression against the independent nation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the genocide committed against the Bosnians, the rape of tens of thousands of women and the murder of innocent people, including children, with the complicity of the Western Powers is eloquent proof of the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Western Powers who claim to be the champions of human rights, democracy and a world order based on international law.

In the case of Algeria, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), elected in a free, fair and democratic election has been denied the right to rule Algeria by a brutal army dictatorship supported by the West because the FIS is committed to ending Western domination in Algeria and establishing a government based on Islamic principles. One can go on citing case after case in which the West has supported dictators against democracies because dictatorships provide better protection for Western economic interests. Therefore, the Western Powers have no moral right to lecture us on democracy, freedom and human rights.

The impact of Western imperialism is confined not only to the economic and political domains of our societies but extends also to every

activity and aspect of our lives. The colonisation of our minds through the Westernised secular education system and the influence of the powerful Western media poses the greatest barrier to our freedom to develop our societies based on a value system rooted in our own rich spiritual traditions and heritage.

We are producing a generation of intellectuals, political leaders, administrators, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and workers who are mesmerised by the glitter and glamour and the ruthless power of Western civilisation. We are becoming imitators of the Western model of development in the belief that it is the best way to counter Western domination, as Japan and the Asian Tigers have proved. This may be possible only for some countries and only in the short term. Over a historical period this type of development is bound to lead to economic ruin, moral degradation and destruction of the social structure and fabric of our societies. This process is already taking place in the West.

The Western model of development is based on greed and individualism which demands an ever increasing production and consumption of goods and services. It encourages aggressive competition, crass materialism and ostentatious living. This modern day *Dajjal* is eradicating our traditional institutions, values and relationships in the same way our beautiful green hills are being levelled by the bulldozers to give way to ugly and soulless housing estates.

It is this model that the Western Powers are trying to force every society to adopt by using international institutions such as the World Bank, IMF and WTO. They want the fields cleared for the penetration of transnational companies (TNCs) into every corner of the world and into every area of our economies, be it finance, biotechnology, computer production or the culture industry.

How are we to end the continuing subjugation and conquest of our societies? There is no simple answer to this question. The West will not leave us alone to experiment our own solutions to our problems. Any effort at reducing our dependence on the West that would lead to reduced profits for their TNCs, is bound to be fiercely resisted and may even take the form of using violence and aggression against militarily weak states.

I believe imperialism is not invincible, and the imperialist system is not impregnable. Western Powers, the architects and benefactors of this

unjust system, are facing serious economic and social crises. Their societies are on the decline. Millions of people in their societies, most of them coloured, are being marginalised and have become an underclass.

The people of the South, who have also been reduced to an underclass, must unite with the disinherited in the developed world and forge an alliance to bring about radical changes in our economies and political institutions and in our own life-styles.

The Western capitalist model based on individualism and unlimited consumption has led us to the brink of a colossal economic, social and environmental disaster. The very basis of life on this planet is under threat of extinction. Therefore, imitation of the Western model is not the solution to our problems.

We have to be creative to rediscover our spiritual roots and to organise our lives and our societies based on the understanding that we are but brief travellers on this planet and that our Creator has entrusted us with the duty of protecting and preserving all that He has created.

This conference, attended by human rights activists and thinkers from 60 countries, will, we hope, lead to a greater understanding of our problems and to an increased commitment on our part to work for the dismantling of the existing unjust world order and building one based on spirituality, justice and freedom.

For us at JUST, this conference is but a first step in our journey of a thousand miles to free the world of domination, exploitation, and injustice. We have heard the impassioned appeals of many of you for more action and not words and declarations. We fully agree with you we need more action—mass action—based on a correct strategic understanding of our problems and goals. Towards this end JUST will aim to:

1. Develop a comprehensive charter of values and principles, responsibilities and rights, roles and relationships acceptable to human beings everywhere;

2. Forge closer networking among individuals and organisations with a view to mobilising the masses to oppose foreign domination and to develop our society based on our rich spiritual heritage;

3. Hold workshops in small groups to study Western global domination in various fields, e.g. education, science and technology, economics, law, politics, media, etc. and develop alternative models rooted in our traditions and cultures;

4. Work closely with governments, NGOs and religious bodies committed to ending Western domination and enslavement to a materialist and hedonist ideology, and the development of a moral and spiritual human being;

5. Provide data, information and expertise to government bodies when negotiating with Western government bodies on treaties, covenants, agreements and other international legal instruments;

6. Conduct research on Western domination in different areas and to build up a data base and documentation for use in our activities;

7. Award fellowships to individuals to make contributions towards analysing the ramifications of Western global domination and developing strategies to counter them. (Chaz Davies, from Zimbabwe, a JUST Fellow, prepared the posters for this conference.)

8. Monitor human rights violations by the Western powers and take action to resist them;

9. Monitor actions by Third World governments which deny basic and fundamental rights to our people with a view to eliminating such abuses.

We need your co-operation, commitment and active participation to make the above activities a success. With faith in God and committed action, Insya Allah, we shall defeat Western imperialism and pave the way for the emergence of a Just World Order.

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OTHER JUST PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Dominance of the West over the Rest

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Human Rights in Asia: the Struggle for Human Dignity

Let Bosnia Live

The Just Cause

Critical Reflections on the Dominant View of Human Rights

This book is a product of an international conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on the theme "Rethinking Human Rights".

There is an urgent need today to examine critically human rights concepts, interpretations and practices spawned by mainstream Western society. Within the human rights community in not only the West but also in the non-Western world there is very little questioning of how the dominant centres of power in the West conceive of human rights and how they approach human rights issues especially in non-Western societies.

The truth is that the dominant West's human rights record taken as a whole is appalling. In the midst of all the euphoria about the triumph of human rights and democracy in the post-cold war era it is often forgotten that the greatest violations of human rights in history—and indeed right up to the present—have been committed not by some tinpot despot in the non-Western world but by dominant centres of power in the West itself.

What is equally significant, the book, while concentrating upon Western global dominance and its impact upon human rights, also chastises elites in the non-Western world who have no compunctions about suppressing the rights of their own people.

Sections of the broad discussion also contain ideas on spiritual and moral values that are so necessary today for a rejuvenated, holistic view on human rights

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